

T H R E E
MINISTERS
Communicating their
COLLECTIONS.

And
N O T I O N S,

Touching
Several Texts of Scripture (most part
practical) at their Weekly Meetings.

W H E R E I N

The *Law* and *Gospel*, *Faith* and *Works*,
justification and *salvation*, and in short
the Substance of *primitive Christianity*
is set forth, as appeareth in the INDEX
prefixed.

Contents of the N. Test. by one of the Three.

T H E F I R S T Y E A R .

Hebr. 13. ἡ φιλαδελφία μενέτω.

L O N D O N,

Printed for Samuel Keble at the Unicorn in
Fleetstreet, between *Serjeants Inn* and
Ram Alley. 1675.



Govern. of the Tong. p. 216. *would some of
parts and authority but make the experiment, I
cannot think that all places are yet so vitiated,
but that they may meet with many, who would
relish sober and ingenious (and religious) discourse,
and by their example propagate it to others.*

Gen. 12. 15 F40 Diction

1084714



To the Right Reverend
Father, Lord Bishop of
the Dioceſs: This Eſſay
with continual Prayers
for his Lordſhips happi-
neſs is the humble Obla-
tion of *A. B. C.*



Advertisements.

THE courteous Readers may be pleased to understand, these *Three Ministers* reside in the *Country* at so little distance, that they easily meet once a week in course at their private Chambers.

There they have a *sober* Treat, they *distinctly* read their *Papers*, they confer *calmly* upon the particulars, and discourse upon the affairs of *Learning and Religion*; consider also, how to do more good in their *cures*, and comfort one another against *Adversities*.

The Names of the *Authors* (*Non-commen-tators*) are not mentioned (though they are worthy of a thankful Remembrance) but the *Notes* are left to commend themselves to the *judicious* Readers; to whom we appeal from the *Vulgar*, who value things only according to that *affection* they have for the *persons*.

The names of the *collectors* are concealed, not to decline Blame, but rather to shun the praise, due to such as endeavour, by uniting themselves to promote *Christian Piety* and *Uniformity* in their stations.

And they humbly conceive, this way of Meeting of *conforming* Ministers (and withal the very Reading of the *Explicit stipulation*) countenanced by Superiours, will prove a good
expe-

expedient to reduce a more regular obedience to the *Church of England*, our honored Mother.

But, it will be very sad, if we fall into an Age, wherein both *Grievances* and *Remedies* are intolerable. *Deus meliora!*

Be not hasty to *censure*, but first have recourse (as the *Ministers* do in their conferences) to your *Bible*, see the Scope, Antecedents and Consequents of the place, weigh them, and then spare not to pass your Sentence.

Amongst 468. *Notes*, every one (we doubt not) who does without *prejudice* go through the Book, will find so many things agreeable and useful to his own soul, that he will not repent to have read it over more than once or twice. Do but open the Book, and you cannot miss of some good Lesson or other. Not a Leaf, *sine bona fruge*.

But remember that all the *Texts* are not expounded, but some alluded to, and ingeniously accommodated to the purpose of the Writer.

If perhaps a new Notion or unusual Interpretation occur, know, that it is not imposed on your *Belief*, but proposed to your *examination*.

Let not any words be *wrested* to the undervaluing of *God's grace*, or over-valuing of *Mans will*. Not unto us, but unto God a'one in *Christ* be the glory of our Salvation.

These

These few sheets are pushed forth to discover what *Reception* the rest may hope for at your Hands.

An Alphabetical *Index* followeth, to give you a *prospect* of what Summ is offered to the intelligent Reader.

And at the *end*, you have *Contents* of the New Test. in Verse, being a help of Memory, and not to be despised.

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F I N I S.

THREE MINISTERS

Communicating their Collecti-
ons and Notions touching Se-
veral Texts of Holy Scripture.

At their weekly Meetings.

The first Meeting.

A.

I. **M**atth. 16. 18. That the gates of Hell shall not prevail against the Church, proves not the pre-
tence of Infallibility. Instead of Hell, the word may be rendred Grave. So, the mean-
ing is : Death (which is the mouth and gate through which we pass into the grave) shall never prevail against the Church, i.e. The Church shall never die.

II. Matth. 16. 18. On this rock, Suppose the rock on which the Church was to

B

be

be built, were S. Peter himself, that is not peculiar unto him, since we are all built on the foundation of the Apostles and Prophets : and on the twelve foundations of the new Jerusalem are written the names of the twelve Apostles of the Lamb.

III. Mat. 16. 19. The keyes of the Kingdome of Heaven given to Peter, saith no more, but that he was to open the Gospel, which is usually called the Kingdome of God, or of Heaven, in the new Testament. Now, the use of keyes being to open the door, this was in peculiar S. Peters honour, who did first publish the Gospel both to Jews and Gentiles, and in particular did first receive the Gentiles into the new dispensation.

B.

I. Luke 19. 26. Unto every one that hath, i. e. hath made use of the talent of Grace intrusted to him (as Heb. 12. 28. To have Grace signifies to make use of it to the end to which it is design'd) shall be given; and from him that hath not : i. e. hath not made use of his talent ; even that he hath shall be taken from him.

II. Act. 2. 47. The Lord added daily to the Church such as should be saved. Τὸς σωζο-
μενους

ἡ σωτηρία, *the saved*. The word signifies peculiarly those who received that exhortation v. 41. that is, *those that repented of their sins*; and therefore the Syriac renders it, *the Lord added daily those that became safe in the Church*, i.e. recovered themselves from that danger in which they were involved among that wicked Generation, and betook themselves to the Church, as to a Sanctuary.

III. Hebr. 2. 16. *He taketh not hold of Angels, but of the seed of Abraham he taketh hold*. So the words are rightly rendred in the margin. Where *ἐπιλαμβάνεται* signifies to catch any one, who is either running away, or falling on the ground or into a pit, to fetch back or recover again. Thus Christ did for men, in being born and suffering in our Flesh; but for Angels he did it not.

C.

I. **M**atth. 1. 23. *They shall call his name Emmanuel. i. e. He shall be God with us, or God incarnate in our flesh*. For in the Hebrew tongue, *word and thing, calling and being, name and person*, are all one, No word (i.e. no thing) shall be impossible with God. And My house shall be called (i.e. shall be

be) the house of prayer to all People, Gentiles as well as Jewes. And so many *nations* i.e. so many men.

II. Mark. 1. 24. *Art thou come to destroy us?* And in another place, *Art thou come to torment us, before our time* Matth. 8. 29. The Devils acknowledge that Christ was to destroy them (they understood so much in the Sacred predictions) but withal hope , it was not yet the time for that execution; and in the mean while counted it a kind of destruction and torment to them to be cast out, or retrenched of any of their power which they had over the bodies or souls of men.

III. Rom. 4. 22. *It was imputed* (or counted) *to him for Righteousness.* i.e. God took this for such an expreſſion of *Abrahams* faithfulness, and sincerity, and true piety, that he accepted him as a righteous person, tho no doubt he had many infirmities and sins, which he was, or had been guilty of in his life, unreconcilable which perfect righteousness.

The second Meeting.

I. 2. **C** Or. 13. 5. Know ye not that Christ Jesus is in you (among you) as Ex. 17. 7.) except ye be reprobates. The words may be best resolved into a question and an answer. Knew you not, discern you not, your selves, by the miracles and preaching, the demonstration of the Spirit and of power, that Christ Jesus, that is, the power of the Gospel, is come amongst you? this by the context appears to be the meaning. And then the Answer, except ye be reprobates, i. e. ye are obdurate, insensate creatures, unless you do know it.

II. Rom. 5. 3, 4, 5. Tribulation worketh patience, and patience experience, and experience hope, and hope maketh not ashamed. Here the word *δοκιμή* which we render experience, signifies being approved upon a tryal, and the sense runs thus: Tribulation is a season and a means to work patience, and that patience to produce approbation, as of one that is tryed in the fire, and hath past the test; and this a means to work an hope or expectation

tion of reward; and that hope will keep from being ashamed of those sufferings, and make us rather rejoyce in them, as in benign auspicious signes, that in another world there is a reward for the righteous. So Rom. 12. 12. *rejoycing in hope, and patient in tribulation,* are joynd together.

III. 1 Joh. 3. 3. *Every man that hath this hope in him (on him, relying on his mercy) purifieth himself.* By this you shall know a Christian hope from all other. The Hypocrite, or Carnal man, hopes, and is the wickeder for hoping, he fears nothing, and so discerns not the necessity of mending. The best way to reform such a one is to rob him of his ungrounded hope. But *this hope of seeing God being grounded on the Conditional promises (and the conditions being purity and holiness, 2 Cor. 7. 1.)* sets presently to the performance of the conditions.

B.

I. **M** *Attb. 22. 37. Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, with all thy Soul, with all thy mind, and with all thy strength.* The heart seemeth to signifie the affections

affections : the *Soul*, the will, or elective faculty : the *mind*, the understanding, or rational faculty : and the *strength*, the powers of the body for action. All four together make up the *whole man* : and the word *all* is affixt to each, not to exclude all other things from any inferior part of your love, but only from an equal or superior love : to exclude a partial or a half-love.

II. *Jam. 5. 16. Confess your faults one to another.* The context seems very probably to mean the *presbyters* : for they are *to be called*, v. 14. And for the *cure* of sin, it will sure be very profitable to advise with the *Physicians* of the Soul : to which end alone the disclosing of the particular estate is more then profitable. And this may tend much to your comfort, when the Minister of God, upon a strict survey of your former life, and your present repentance, passes judgment on you, better than you can do on your self.

III. I. John 3. 9. *Whosoever is born of God doth not commit sin (i.e. doth not live in sin as in a trade or course) for his seed remaineth in him :* (there is in the regenerate a new principle, or seed of life, a cognation with God, which whilst it continues keeps out sin) *and he cannot sin in such manner,*
B 4
because

because he is born of God: or if he do sin thus, he is no longer a child of God, or a regenerate person. So we say, *An honest man cannot do this*: not affirming an impossibility, but that his principles of honesty will not suffer him to do it; or if he do it, he is no longer to be counted an honest man.

C.

I. **G**al. 5. 17. *The flesh lusteth against the spirit* &c. By the spirit it meant the seed of Grace planted in the heart by God, as a principle of new life; or, the mind and upper Soul elevated yet higher by that supernatural principle: By the flesh is meant the carnal appetite, still remaining in the most regenerate during this life: *The lusting* of one against the other, is their contrariety, that whatsoever one likes, the other dislikes; *ὅτι καὶ ποιεῖτε, So that you do not the things ye would*: this contrariety gives you trouble; that whatsoever ye do on either side, you do it not quietly, but with resistance. In this opposition, we must be sure that the flesh do not carry it against the Spirit, i. e. do not get the consent of the will to it. For he that fulfils the lust's of the flesh, walkes not
in

in the Spirit, and consequently is not in a regenerate estate.

II. *Matth. 16. 24. If any man will come after me, let him deny himself.* Self denial is to renounce whatsoever comes at any time in competition with Christ : namely, all opinion of my own abilities towards the attaining of any supernatural end ; not depending upon any righteousness of my own for Salvation, but only the free mercy of God in Christ, not imputing unto me sin : All unlawful desires of the flesh, and even lawful liberty, my reputation, my estate, and life if selfe, when either Christ must be parted with, or these. By *taking up the Cross* in the following words, is meant bearing of Affliction, patiently, and chearfully.

III. *Phil. 1. 29. To you it is given : i. e. It is granted as a grace and Vouchsafement of Gods special favour, to suffer for Christ ; and that grace is designed to reform what is amiss, and to punish here, that there may be nothing of evil left for another world. Wherefore we are bound not only to patience, but thankfulness also in our Afflictions,*

The third Meeting.

A.

I. 1. **C**OR. 2. 9. Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man, the things which God hath prepared for them that love him. The true superlative delights even to flesh and blood, that are in Sanctity and the practice of Christian Virtues, beyond all that any sensual pleasure affords, are so great that when they are exprest by the Apostle in these words, they are ordinarily mistaken for the description of Heaven.

II. ROM. 7. 23. I see another law in my members warring against the law of my mind. This war is the perswasion of sin or carnal objects on the one side, and the law of God on the other commanding the contrary. In this Combat the person which hath not the grace of Christ to sustain him, will by his carnal appetite be led to do those things which the Law tells him he should not do: which if he do and continue in them, this condition you will have no colour of reason to mistake for a regenerate estate. The
serv.

serving of sin, or Captivity to the law of sin, is all one with the reigning of sin : a sure token of the unregenerate.

III. Prov. 28. 13. *Who so confesseth and forsaketh his sins shall have mercy : forsaketh, i. e.* in hearty sincere resolution abandons the sins of the old man, *shall have mercy*, and none but he. God will not pardon, till we in heart reform and amend. They that say our sins are pardoned before we convert to God, and resolve new life, are in a dangerous error; which is in effect to exclude *Justification by faith*, that first grace of receiving Christ, and resigning our hearts up to him, and must be in order of nature precedent to our Justification, or pardon of sin : or else can be neither *instrument* nor *condition* of it.

B.

I. **R**om. 12. 20. *Thou shalt heap coals of fire on his head.* Thats the way that *Metallists* use, to melt those things that will not be wrought on by putting fire under them. So, if you heap kindneses upon the head of your enemy, the injurious person, you may hope to melt him, and make a friend of him; which is the noble victory of

of a Christian, to overcome evil with good.

II. Math. 5. 5. *The meek shall inherit the Earth.* Literally, the promise is all one with that annexed to the fifth Commandment. A prosperous long life is ordinarily the meek mans portion, which he that shall compare and observe the ordinary dispensations of Gods providence, shall find to be most remarkably true; especially, if compared with the contrary fate of turbulent, seditious persons. This temporal reward can no way deprive him of the eternal. The earth here is a real inheritance below, and a pawn of another above.

III. Matth 5. 39. *Resist not evil, or, the injurious, evil man.* We Christians must beare small, supportable injuries, without hurting again or so much as prosecuting and impleading the injurious person. In weightier and more considerable matters, tho we may use means to defend ourselves, and to get legal reparations for our losses; yet even in these the giving way to revengeful desires is utterly unlawful.

C.

Matth. 5. 48. *Be ye therefore perfect.* Instead of which St. Luke hath, *Be ye merciful.*

merciful. Whence you may note; this Mercy, or Almes, or Benignity to enemies, to be the highest degree of Christian perfection.

II. 1 Cor. 16. 2. *Let every one of you lay by him in store, as God hath prospered him.* This place seems to require all to be set apart, that comes in by way of gain: for tis not *as*, but *as, 7,* whatsoever. It was, it seems, a peculiar case at that time, for relieving the poor Christians at *Jerusalem*. However, hence may every rich man, or thriving man; every one that hath either constant revenue, or gainful Trade, learn to lay by him such or such a proportion for charitable purposes, that it may be ready for such occasions, as God shall offer to them.

III. Matth. 5. 16. *Let your light so shine before men that they may see your good works.* There is a great difference between doing our good works so that *men may see them*, and doing them *to be seen of men*: and again, between doing them that men may glorifie our Heavenly Father, and that *we may have glory of men*. The former is only a charitable care, that your good actions may be exemplary to others: the latter, is a desire that they may be matter of Reputation to *our selves*, Which reputation, if we aim at that, shall be our only reward, instead of that which otherwise God would

would give. Such is the folly and unhappiness of this sin of *vain-glory*.

The Fourth Meeting

A.

I. **M** Atth. 6. 17. *When thou fastest, anoynt thy head, and wash thy face. As for thy outward guise, appear in thy ordinary countenance and habit, (the Jews were wont to anoynt themselves daily, unless in time of mourning :) that thou appear not to men to fast : (that no man out of thy Family be witness of thy private Fasts :) but to thy Father which is in heaven, that thou maist appear desirous to approve thy self to him only, who only is able to reward thee.*

II. Luke 6. 30. *From him that taketh away thy goods, ask them not again, λαβόντες, that receiveth by way of loan any of thy Goods; μὴ ἀπαιτεῖν, require no usury, according to the notion of that word in the Text. Which being joyned with, give to every man that asketh of thee, denoteth a work of mercy : as indeed lending is a prime way of mercy. The good man is merciful and lendeth. Now ordinary prudence will interpret the words so, that*

if

if a Covetous rich man ask of you, you are not bound to give to him, but only to him whose wants sets him on asking: and so the prohibition to exact or require use of him that horrors, belongs not to the poor or mean Creditor, when a rich man borrows of him; but only when the rich lends to the poor man, to whom a free loan is a seasonable mercy.

III. Act. 2. 46. *Breaking Bread from house to house, margin, at home.* καὶ οἶκον, in some house, or Room: as the upper room Act. 1. 13. alligned and separated from all other to that peculiar use, to be the place of Christian Assembly; it being by the Jews, permitted them to pray in the temple, but not to break bread or administer the Sacrament. v. 47. *having favour with all the people:* ἐχούσας χάριν, having or exercising charity: whereby is intimated that offertory which was then, and ever since, used constantly in the Church of Christ at the receiving of that Sacrament: and by the phrase *all the people*, is signified the liberality of those offerings, and the impartiality of distribution.

don't say, but to the fact that the word is used in the Bible.

I. I **C**Or. 6. 10. *Drunkards shall not inherit the Kingdom of God.* μεθυσιν *vinosi, violenti*, from μεθυ *strong or sweet wine*. The word is not to be restrained to those who drink to bestiality; to the depriving of themselves of the use of their reason; but belongs to all, that drink wine or strong drink *intemperately*; tho through their strength of brain, they be not at present distempered by it.

II. Act. 2. 31. *His soul was not left in hell.* The word *hells* which we render *hell*, may signify the common state of the dead: *ψυχη* the *living Soul*, or that faculty by which we live: and the *not leaving* this in that, is the not suffering him so long to continue *depriv'd of life*, as that, this *body should see corruption*: i. e. above the space of three days: which term consisting of 72. hours, is the space required for the revolution of humors, after which *Physicians* observe the body that continues so long dead, naturally putrefies.

III. John. 16. 8. *It shall convince the world of sin, of righteousness, and of judgment.* For 1. The very coming of the spirit shall prove their
their

their crime in not receiving Christ, thus testified and demonstrated to be the true Prophet.

2. He shall convince the World, that Christ was a most *Righteous* person, and most unjustly crucified, by his assumption into Heaven.

3. He shall convince the World by an Argument from the *Judgement* shewed upon Satan, to be turn'd out of his Kingdome, his Oracles silenc'd; and Heathenish Idolatry overthrown.

C.

I. **M**atth. 28. 19. *Baptizing them in the Name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the holy Ghost.* The meaning is, First, in respect of the *Minister*, that what he doth he doth not of himself, but by Commission, from the blessed Trinity: Secondly, And more especially in respect of the *person baptiz'd*, that he acknowledges those three; that he delivers himself to them as the Authors of Christian Religion; that he gives himself up to be ruled by them.

II. 1 Tim. 5. 8. *But if any (widow) provide not for her own.* The word *προνοειν* signifies to rule and govern: or, to educate and instruct. Among the rest of the qualities required of a widow in the Church

(an office of some rule and oeconomy at that time) she must be one that hath ru'd and instructed her own family well. This differs much from the notion that some worldly phantasies affix to this place, thinking themselves obliged, with much thoughtfulness or secular fore-casting, to provide estates and riches for their Children.

III. Tit. 1. 15. To the pure all things are pure. i. e. All things of that nature, which are there spoken of, in themselves indifferent, may lawfully be used by them which are rightly instructed. But they that are misled by Jewish fables, whether they abstain superstitiously, when they are not bound by God to abstain, sin by being subject to ordinances, (Col. 2. 20.) or whether they abstain not, when they are perswaded they ought to abstain, sin against conscience.

The Fifth Meeting

A.

I. Matth. 12. 31. But the blasphemy against the Holy Ghost shall not be forgiven unto men. This blasphemy against the Holy Ghost is not any one act, no nor habit

at it of sin (particularly, not that speaking
ed gainst *Christ* here mentioned) but a final
his holding out against, and resisting the whole
me office of the *Holy Ghost*, and all those graci-
ous methods consequent to it.

II. 1. Kings 15. 5. *David turned not aside,
Gave only in the matter of Uriah.* Wherein it
appears, he continued neer the space of a
year, from before the conception till after
the birth of the Child, as is proved by the
time of *Nathans* coming to him, 2 *Sam.* 12.
1. *David*, we know, had been guilty of
several acts of sin, markt and censured in
the word of God; but continued not with
indulgence in any of them. This sin made
another manner of separation between *God*
and *David*, Contracted a greater guilt, wasted
the conscience more than any of those, more
speedily retracted: it was the only remarkable
drawing back or turning aside from o-
bedience to *God*, the only grand defection,
shaking of *Gods* yoke, and so the only *Chism*
in his regenerate estate.

III. Deut. 30. 11. *The Commandment
which I command this day is not hidden from
thee? The seventy, not too heavy for thee, and
elsewhere, not impossible* 1 *Joh.* 5. *His commands
are not greivous: the word signifies heavy,
Christ himself saith, his yoke is easie,* and S.

Paul, that he can do all things through Christ : not sufficient of himself to do any thing.

B.

I. Luke. 17. 37. *Wheresoever the body is, thither will the Eagles be gathered together.* Here are noted the Roman Armies, whose ensign was the Eagle : which found out the rebellious Jews and destroyed them (as the Eagle seeks the prey, Job. 39. 29.) wheresoever they dispersed themselves.

II. Matth. 24. 34. *This generation shall not pass till all these things be fulfilled.* They shall come to pass in this age, or within the life of some present : as Matth. 16. 28. *There be some standing here that shall not taste of death, till they see the Son of man coming in his Kingdom :* Which is interpreted of this matter, his illustrious coming to destroy his enemies the Jewes. So, Joh. 21. 22. *If I will that he tarry till I come, &c.* is spoken of this coming of Christ, which S. John lived to see.

III. Gal. 5. 19. *Adultery, fornication, uncleanness, &c. Emulation, wrath, strife, &c.* Here is an enumeration of Sins unreconcilable with a good conscience. And the same; with some variation and addition, 1 Cor. 6. 5. and

Eph.

ist: Eph. 5. 5. Every one of these at the very Commission (deliberately) have the nature of *peccata sauciantia*, wounding the sinner to the heart, and weakning the habit of Christian Vertue; and if they be not strait retracted by repentance, proceed further, to wast the conscience, and betray us even to desperation, and withdrawing of Grace, and delivering us up to our own lusts.

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1. J. 1. 16. He shall give him life for them that sin not unto death? Here, not unto death, is to be taken, not from the matter of the sin, but from the disposition of the sinner: namely from his desiring and labouring to get out of it: which supposes some remainder of exciteing grace: while the other goes on without any care or desire of reformation. It is clear, that this privilege belongs to the prayers of the Faithful, or such a more moderate degree of relaps'd reformed sinners. Upon their request, God will give life to such, i. e. such a degree of grace as may enable them to recover. As for the secure Impenitent, the Christian brother is not here obliged to pray for him; and yet seems he is not forbidden neither.

II. Matth;

II. Matth. 18. 6. He that shall offend one of these little ones : That is, He that shall occasion their falling off into any sin : or, which the place especially imports, shall by contempt discourage them from the study of piety. For so, on the other side, to receive them, as is by S. Mark, 9. 41. said to consist in doing them kindness, and encouraging them in the way of God.

III. Joh. 6. 61. Jesus said unto them doth this offend you? They were offended at his words of eating his flesh, carnally understood ; discouraged from following him. So Gal. 5. 11. persecution is call'd the scandal of the Cross, that upon which so many are discouraged from professing the crucified Saviour : and so, in the parable of the sower Matt. 13. 21.

The sixth Meeting.

A.

*I. **M**atth. 16. 23. Thou art an offence unto me. i. e. By expressing thy detestation against my suggestions, thou offerest to bring me into an hour*

and fear of Suffering, and so in effect tempt me to sin. But, though *Peter* were an offence to *Christ*, tempted him, and said that which was to ensnare him, yet *Christ* was not offended, ensnared, or overcome by the temptation.

II. Rom. 14. 3. *Let not him that eateth despise him that eateth not.* Those who are in Judaical errors are appointed by *S. Paul* to be tenderly handled, not to be *Vilified* or set at naught. And yet *Gal. 3. 1.* they are by the Apostle reviled and chid out of their Judaical persuasions. The reason of this difference is, the different estates of the *Romans* from the *Galatians*. These had been fully instructed by him in the nature of Christian liberty: Those had not yet been sufficiently taught to put off the opinion of legal abstinences.

III. Rom. 4. 3. *Abraham believed God, and it was counted to him for righteousness.* Abraham was *Justified* by believing and depending on God for the performance of his promise, and resigning himself up wholly to him to obey his precepts. Or, by that Faith, which howsoever it was tryed, whether by promises of incredible things, or commands of very hard duties (as killing his only Son) did constantly approve it self to be a true Faith; without *usinng* Obedience, or Obedience

dience to the *Mosaical* law, (*Abraham being then uncircumcised v. 10.*) i. e. *without Works.*

B.

I. **G**AL. 5. 2. *If ye be circumcised, Christ shall profit you nothing.* Tis spoken of those, who urge abolisht Ceremonies, as still of force by divine precept: upon this ground, that *Christ* coming as the substance typified by those legal Institutions, did consequently set a period to their obligingness. Which, if it should still be urged would be interpretative of the denying of *Christ*, and so most justly the forfeiting of those Benefits which are to be expected from him.

II. 1 Tim. 4. 8. *Bodily exercise profiteth little.* This place of *bodily exercise*, doth belong to such kind of ἀσκήσις, abstinence, continence, as are aforementioned: Which, though when they are taught as necessary, to the defaming of marriage or meats as unlawful, are then signes of *departing from the Faith*, v. 1. yet considered in themselves, as voluntary acts. are here said to be *profitable*, in an inferior degree, being compared which piety, a little profitable, or for a little.

- III. Col. 2. 23. *In will worship, and humility, and neglecting of the body, or, not sparing.*

That

That *wil worship* is here taken in a good creditable sence, appeareth by the joining of it with two not only lawful but laudable Christian Vertues, humility (which is *Dei & hominum reverentia*, *Calv.*) and mortifying of the body, which as an act of self-denial cannot be unacceptable to Christ.

C.

I. Col. 2. 23. *not in any honour to the satisfying of the flesh.* Not administering to the Body things to the filling or satiating of the flesh. *much care* in relieving of wants. *Matth.* 15. 6. Or, those abstinences from flesh are commendable for chastning the Body, so that in the mean time it be not *indulged* otherwise, as with wine and sweetmeats.

II. Luke. 10. 27. *Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart.* i. e. sincerely, and above all other things. Yet, one man may love God in a more intense degree then another doth, and the same person may constantly love God above all, and yet have higher expressions of that love at one time then another. Whence it followes, that *Free-will offerings* are reconcilable with that command.

III. Gen. 44. 5. *And whereby indeed be divineth.*

vineth. The cup, *with which he receiveth presages*: for 'twas (it seems) but a drinking cup, wherein he used to drink, in those Sacrifices, by which he prepared to receive presages from God.

The Seventh Meeting.

A.

I. **E**Xod. 7 13. *And he hardened Pharaoh's heart.* 'Tis not to be understood, as we read it, God hardn'd Pharaoh's heart. The words do not bear it, nor had any such thing yet been intimated in the story. Here is an act of Stubbornness in Pharaoh, an obstinate resistance or refusal, against Gods calls and miracles. There was indeed a prediction of it, 2. 19. and that grounded only on Gods prescience: which hath no more influence on the effect, nor causality of it, then your seeing of any object

II. Matth. 16. 19. *I will give thee the keyes of the kingdom of Heaven.* Here, as in many other places, the kingdom of Heaven signifies the Church of Christ militant. So, 23. 13. the Pharises shutting up the Kingdom of Heaven, is the keeping men from entering the Church, from becoming Christians. Peter, and in him
the

the rest of the Apostles, and Successors, Governors of the Church, had the *Keyes* of the Church given them, i. e. clearly, a power of *shutting out*, or *receiving into* to the Visible militant Church, of removing the contumacious by censure of *Excommunication*, and re-admitting them being humble penitents, by *Absolution*.

III. Matth. 12. 32. *It shall not be forgiven him* (*ἀποθνήσκειται* impersonally) *he shall not receive absolution, neither in this World, i. e. in the Church from the Ecclesiastick Censure: nor in the World to come: i. e. at the day Judgment.*

B.

I. 2. **T**Hes. 3. 14. *Have no company with him that he may be ashamed.* The end of *Excommunication* is, that the offender may be brought to a sense and shame of his own vileness, the most necessary preparative to reformation: a great act of mercy and charity, though under the shew of Severity. It followes v. 15. *Count him not as an enemy, but admonish him as a brother.* This binding and loosing is used as a means of exemplifying that great Truth
that

that Christ came to save and *reduce* that which was *lost*. Matth. 18. 11.

II. Matth. 20. 22. *Ye know not what ye ask.* Jesus represseth the Mothers demand, by telling her, she is mistaken in the kind of dignity that should be instated upon his disciples: not such a one, as in any worldly respects would prove desirable, but, as a place of great burden, so subject to great persecutions, and even death it self.

III. Matth. 20. 26. *but it shall not be so among you.* Heathen princes use their power in order to their own profit, and pleasure, and praise (*καταναυωσικας*) behaving themselves as *Lords and Masters* over so many Servants. Your pre-eminence brings along with it no great secular felicity, but an office of burden, and pains and humility, and doing of service. The pre-eminence of *Christ* himself was such. This excludes not disciples of Christ from power: for he owne the title of *Lord and master*, Joh. 13. 13. but from Lording, and governing by violence, and in an imperious way, seeking their own gain and honour.

C.

I. **R**om. 13.2. *They that resist shall receive to themselves damnation: κρίμα.* Some render it *Judgment*, as that signifies some temporary punishment which the higher powers may inflict, and nothing else. But v. 5. *be subject not only for wrath:* temporal punishment is meant by *wrath*: which if it were all, then how can it be true that we must be subject *not only* for that? He that resists shall receive more then mans punishment, if he prevent it not by repentance; it wounds *his* conscience, and binds him over to Gods punishment likewise.

II. 1 Pet 4.17. *Judgment must begin at the house of God.* Here are specified two parts of Judgement: τὸ πρῶτον, the first part; and τὸ τέλος, the end, or (as the word sounds) the tail of it. So that onely the tolerable easie part of the Judgment belongs unto the godly: but the end, the dregs, the unsupportable part, to those that obey not the Gospel. The first part is Gods retribution to sin here, wherein the Godly have their part: the other, his rendring to the wicked hereafter. Prov 11.31.

III. Joh. 2.15. *He drove them all out of the Temple*

Temple. This fact of Christ was done *jure Zelotarum*, by a power that belonged to the Zelots: for whom the Law allowed such liberty. Whereupon the disciples remembered how it was written of him: *The zeal of thine house, (καὶ ἐπαιέ μὲ) hath fed on me.* Not all things that were done by the Jews, under pretence of this right, were well done: but only such as were done by men truly incited by God, like *Phinehas* and *Elias*.

The Eight Meeting.

A.

I. **M** *Atth. 16. 24. And take up his Cross.* This extends to the voluntary embracing of shame and contumely (for the Cross was a *contumelious* death *Heb. 12. 2.*) and consequently all other loss of goods, liberty &c. and beyond that, pain of Body, and death it self, Which are said to be taken up, not when we bring them unnecessarily upon our own shoulders; but when by the providence of God they are laid, or permitted to lye in our way to Christ, or Christian Obedience; so that we cannot serve Christ perfectly, but that it must be some detriment

triment or dammage to us; then voluntary to undergo that detriment, whatever it is, is to take up the Cross.

II. Heb. 2. 10. *To make the captain of our salvation perfect through sufferings.* God bringing, or being about that gracious work of bringing many sons unto glory, consecrated or inaugurated (so *ἡγιασμός* signifies, the word used at the consecration of Priests) Christ by sufferings. Who being so consecrated (*ἡγιασθεὶς*) became the *Author of Eternal salvation*, 59. Thus are we Christians to expect our *ἡγιασμός*, whether consecration to our dignity of being *Kings and Priests*, i.e. Christians here, or consummation and crowning hereafter, by the same method, by sufferings.

III. Heb. 12. 6. *Whom the Lord loveth he chasteneth &c.* Not only, if you be not prepared to bear, but if you be *without Chastisement*, then are ye *not sons*. Which when it is set down as an Aphorism of divine Observation in the Kingdome of Christ, there will be no safety in labouring to avoid the literal importance of it.

B.

I. **R**om. 8. 20. *All things work together for good.* Those *all things* are specified v. 35. *Tribulation, Distress, Persecution, &c.* These are the things to which the Lovers of God are foreappointed and *predestinate*: to those they are called; to be conformable to Christ. So S. Peter also speaks, 1. 2. 21.

II. Mark. 10. 30. — *With persecutions.* The *hundred fold* which Disciples are promised to receive *now in this time*, though they be secular blessings, *houses and brethren &c.* yet must they be *with persecution*. Which words, though neither St. Matthew nor St. Luke records, yet St. Peter, who dictated this Gospel, remembered them, as he had most reason, being an Answer directed to a question of his proposing. Those Duties, which are promised the greatest reward on this earth, must not expect payment without a mixture.

III. Isa. 2. 4. *They shall beat their swords into plow shares.* 'Tis a phrase to express the duty and obligation of Christians. Charity is the only Precept, Peace the only *despositum*, that Christ took care to leave among them. *They i. e.* These subjects of Christs Kingdome that are his disciples indeed, effectually changed by

by his Spirit, and made new Creatures, they will certainly do so.

C.

I. **M**atth 11. 30. *My yoke is easie, and my burthen is light.* Some think, there is no need of duty, Obedience is unnecessary. Christ hath a yoke and a burthen. Some confessing a necessity of Christian Obedience conceive it impossible. Christ's yoke is *easie*, his burthen *light*. Some yeilding both the necessity and possibility, say it is an unpleasant task. Here is *χρησμός* for them, which signifies more than easie, a gracious, joyous, and gainful yoke.

II. 2 Pet. 1. 20. *No prophecy of the Scripture is of any private interpretation.* *ἰδίᾳ τινὸς*, of their own incitation, or motion: but the Prophets were moved by the Holy Ghost, as it follows in the next verse.

III. 1. Cor. 3. 21. *All things are yours:* not absolutely, but subordinately: Serviceable according to the exigence of your condition, and furtherance of your salvation.

D *The*

The Ninth Meeting.

A.

I. **P** Sal. 37. 25. *I have not seen the righteous forsaken: Nor his seed begging their bread. i. e. Never so wholly forsaken, if they were inheritors of their Fathers hope and profession, as to make a constant trade of begging. Or thus: never forsaken, though they begg'd their bread, but even in that extremity God was present with them.*

II. Ps. 66. 3. *Through the greatness of thy power shall thy Enemies submit themselves unto thee. In the Original it is, they shall lye unto thee; and so 'tis translated by some, meminerunt. A forced submission to God is seldom in truth.*

III. Ps. 37. 16. *A little that the righteous hath, is better than great riches of the ungodly. The righteous live, and eat, and are clothed, they have comfort more, less anguish of heart, less vexation and contention of mind. And to them it is all one, whether they go to Heaven through the gate or through the wicket.*

B.

B.

I. I. **C**Or. 6. 7. *A fault, because you go to Law.* The words are not positive, but comparative: That a man should rather chuse to leave his name, life, estate unvindicated, then by defending them, unavoidably bring a *Scandal* upon Christ.

II. Jude 8. *They speak evil of Dignities.* The word is *Μεγας Glories*. Men in eminent place are, or should be, the glory of the places where they live.

III. Act. 7. 20. *Moses was exceeding fair.* The word *αἰνῶς* signifies fine and neat, so as Citizens are wont to be. *καὶ θεῶς* fair to God, divinely beautiful. By addition of which word is signified excellency. Jon. 3. *Ninevehs a very great city, Heb-magna Deo.*

C.

I. **E**ccl. 11. 1. *Cast thy bread upon the Waters.* Husbandmen to perpetuate the fruits of the earth, cast some of their corn back again into a fruitful soil, where the *Waters* come, and in due time receive it multiplied. So should we do with *Worldly goods*, bestow some of them upon the bowels and backs

backs of the poor members of Christ, and in the day of harvest we shall have a great encrease.

II. Amos. 2. 7. *That pant after the dust of the earth on the head of the poor.* The Prophet speaks of cruel oppressors, who greedily pursue the poor to extremity, depriving them of their very livelihood, till they are fain to lye down in the dust.

III. Dact. 20. 5. *When a man hath taken a new wife he shall not go out to War.* One reason may be this: because when the mind is strongly set upon any object, till the strength of that desire is abated, a man will be unfit to deal with an Enemy, or attend business.

The Tenth Meeting.

A.

I. **E**xod. 35. 30. *The Skin of her shone.* It is to denote the exceeding purity and brightness of the Law, which no sinner is able (with peace) to look upon.

II. Gen. 25. 22. *And the Children struggle together within her.* Jacob was a man of contentment.

Contention and wrestling from the beginning :
 Contention with his brother in the Birth,
 Contention for the Birth-right: Contention
 with an Angel for the blessing: Contention
 for his Wife, and for his wages with *Laban*.
 He was a *Typical* man: his name was *Israel*,
 and he was a pattern to the *Israel of God*. We
 must be all men of Contention; contend
 and wrestle, not only with *God* in strong and
 importunate prayers for his blessings but
 with our Elder Brother *Esa*, with the lusts
 and frowardness of our own hearts.

III. Lament. 39. *Wherefore doth a living
 man complain, &c.* Here are Three strong
 Reasons against murmurers. 1. We are *Men*,
 and at Gods dispose. 2. *Sinful* men, punish-
 ment is our due. 3. *Living*, and therefore pu-
 nish't less then we deserve.

B.

I. **I** Sa. 1. 2. *Hear O Heavens, and give ear
 O earth!* Nothing so far from the voice
 of the Prophet as the *Heavens*, nothing so dull
 and impenetrable as the *Earth*: and yet the
Heavens likelier to hear, the *Earth* like-
 lier to listen and attend, then *Obdurate sin-
 ners*.

I. Gen. 18. 21. *I will not curse the ground*

any more for mans sake, for (though so Jos. 17. 18.) though the imagination, &c. Although men are so wicked, that if I would *meo jure uti*, take advantage to pour out my displeasure upon them. I might do it every day, yet I will spare them.

III. 2. Cor. 5. 17. Behold all things are become new. If a man be Christ's, there will be *Nova regalia* extremely opposite to those of sin, a new heart for the throne of the Spirit, new members to be servants of righteousness, new Counsellors, namely the Laws of God; a new panoply, the whole armour of God; new laws, the law of the mind; thoughts, Words, Actions, all new.

C.

I. **R**om. 7. 8, Without the Law sin was dead. The Law is said to quicken sin, not *per se*, out of the intention of the Law, but by accident and *antiperistasis*, exciting and provoking that strength which was in sin before, tho undiscern'd, and less operative: as the presence of an enemy doth actuate and call forth that malice, which lay habitually in the heart before.

II. 1 Cor. 7. 31. The Fashion of this world passeth away. *σχῆμα*, the figure, intimating that there

is

is nothing of firmness, or solid consistency in the Creature: it is but a surface, and outside, an empty shew; all the *beauty* of it is but *skin-deep*.

III. Eph. 4. 26. *Be angry but sin not.* It is not a precept, but a speech by way of *Confession*, or supposition. If through your infirmity, you be overtaken with anger, do not harden the Passion into an habit: let not a spark become a flame,

The Eleventh Meeting.

A.

I. **E** Ph. 4. 30. *Whereby ye are sealed.* You are said to be *sealed* by the Spirit, because that spiritual holiness, which is in the word, is fashioned into your hearts, as the image of the seal in the wax,

II. Eph. 2. 2. *Ye walked according to the course of this World.* Such are example, custome, good intentions, mercy taken without conditions, pleading frailty of nature, *we are all men, the best have their infirmities; distinctions, extenuations, evasions, and such like.*

III. Col. 2. 8. *Beware lest any man spoil you through*

through Philosophy and vain deceit: Learning it self is an honourable and noble endowment. It's recorded for the glory of Moses, that he was Learned in all the Wisdome of the Egyptians. But corruption is apt to turn learning into leaven, to infect the heart with pride; which being arm'd and seconded with Wit, breaks out into perverse disputes.

B.

I. 1. **T**Im 6.17. God gives us all things richly to enjoy. This importes a delightful, sweet, orderly use of them: which is the fruit of the Gospel promises. Wicked men have a lawful interest, possession, and use of them, but all this doth not reach to a fruition.

II. Hebr. 11.1. Faith is the substance of things hoped for. Faith gives being and present subsistency to things far distant from us; makes those things which in regard of natural causes are very remote, in regard of Gods promises to seem nigh at hand.

III. Hebr. 12.2. Looking unto Jesus. We must not alwayes cast our eye to the clog: but look unto him that can carry us thorow all difficulties: Look what he did, what contradiction he endured; look what he promises,

a victory over our lusts, and a crown after victory.

C.

I. **Gen. 2.9, 17.** *The Tree of Knowledge of good and evil.* So called, because it signified unto them, that as now while they stood upon terms of Obedience with their Creator, they knew nothing but good, so, at what time soever they did transgress his Commandment, they should begin to know evil also. Not but they had an *intellectual* knowledge of it before (*Rectum est index sui & obliqui*) but that till then they had never felt any evil, they never had any *Experimental* knowledge of it.

II. **1 Cor. 3. 10.** *As a wise Master-builder I have laid the foundation.* Great Scholars possibly may think, that it standeth not so well with their credit to stoop so low; and spend time, in teaching the *principles* of the doctrine of Christ: but they should consider these words of the great Apostle: That the laying of the *foundation* skilfully, as it is the matter of greatest importance in the whole building, so it is the *very Master piece* of the Builder.

III. **Ezech. 18. 30.** *Make you a clean heart*

In another place, *A new heart will I give you.* How do these consist? He commands us to do, what he promises to do himself; to teach us, that tis the Work of his Grace, which we must not resist when tis offer'd. *Ille facit, ut nos faciamus quæ præcepit.* Augustin.

The Twelfth Meeting.

A.

I. **M** Atth. 6. 11. *Give us this Day our Daily bread.* By saying, *Give us*, we acknowledge that it is from God: but when we call it *ours*, we shew how God gives it: namely in the use of means. For *bread* is ours, not only in the right of the promise, but by service, and quiet working in an orderly calling.

II. Hebr. 6. 19. *We have hope, as an anchor of the soul.* We have no reason to hope for any thing, which is not promised; nor upon other conditions, then as promised. Wherefore, *hope* is compared to an *anchor* sure and stedfast; because it must have something of firmness and stability to fasten upon, before it can secure the soul in any tempest. To hope without a promise, or otherwise then it stands,

stands, is but to let an anchor hang in the water, or catch in a wave, and thereby to expect safety to the Vessel.

III. 1 Joh. 4. 20. *He that loveth not his brother whom he hath seen, &c.* How can he abide the *Sun* of righteousness and the splendor of his holiness, who cannot endure or delight in a ray of holiness in his Brother, being of the same nature and passions with him?

B.

I. 2 **P**ET. 1. 4. *Partaker of the divine nature.* It notes two things. 1. a participation of the divine *Holiness* which is communicated to us by our union with Christ. 2. A participation of the divine *Blessedness* which is here begun, and shall be compleat in the beatifical vision of God.

II. Ps. 110. 3. *The dew of thy birth is of the womb of the morning.* The prophet in passion of joy misplaceth his words. The right order is: *Thy birth from the Womb is as the morning dew*, which watereth and refresheth the whole earth, not *Gideons* fleece alone, not the *Jewes* only.

III. Col. 2. 3. *In him are hid the treasures of Wisdom.* Not, that they may not be found, but

but that they may be sought, *Christ* hath wisdom as a Kings Treasurer hath riches, as a *Dispenser* of it to the friends and servants of his Father.

C.

I. **J**oh. 1. 16. *Of his fulness have we all received, and Grace for Grace.* *Christ* was full, not as a Vessel, but as a fountain, and as a Sun, to communicate unto us. And as a child in generation receiveth from his Parents member for member; so in *regeneration*, *Christ* is fully formed in you, and you receive in some measure and proportion *Grace for Grace*: there is no *Grace* in *Christ* appertaining to general Sanctification, which is not in some degree fashioned in you.

II. Joh. 3. 17. *I came not to condemn the World.* This was no motive or impulsive cause of my Coming, though it were an accidental event, consequent, and emergency thereupon. So is *Christ* a rock of offence, Rom. 9. 33. *Set for the fall of many.* Luk. 2. 14.

III. Eph. 4. 4. *One body and one Spirit.* The Spirit of Holines was *Christ*s, *jure proprio*, and he was *Full of Grace*: his members have the Spirit derived to them from

from their head; the same Spirit in truth,
but not in the same measure of Grace.

The Thirteenth Meeting.

A.

I. 1. **C**OR. 2. 14. *The natural man perceiveth not the things of the Spirit, &c.* The word *λογος* doth properly signifie *animalis*. The animal man is such a one, as gives himself up to the government of his inferior faculties: a carnal sensual man: so that he is so far from being a man of reason, that he is most irrational. Such a man *receiveth not the things of God*: he being drowned in sensuality cannot relish such things, i.e. while he remains so. *They are spiritually discerned*. i.e. by virtue of a higher principle, then that which is predominant in this man. Men cannot receive the things of Gods Spirit, till by the assistance thereof, their reason hath regained its authority, and be able to keep under their brutish affections.

II. Deut. 18. 1. &c. *If there arise among you a Prophet, &c.* From this passage, these two things are plainly to be gathered. 1. That we are to consider the doctrine it self, before

before we believe it to be of God, as well as the means of its confirmation: 2. That God, for certain reasons, may suffer wonders to be wrought, i.e. such things as no man can give account how they should be effected by natural means, for the confirmation of a false doctrine.

III. Rom. 4. 9. Jam. 2. 22. As *S. Paul* proved what he designed, by shewing that *Abraham* was justified by *Faith* without the works of the Law; so *S. James* proveth his design by shewing, that the *Faith Abraham* was justified by, was such as discover'd it self by *Obedience* to Gods commands; and instanceth in the highest act of obedience too, viz. his offering *Isaac* upon the Altar.

B.

1. **P**hil. 3. 9. Not having my own righteousness, &c. He means that which consisted in the observance of the Jewish Law: which he calleth his own, as being that which before his conversion he gloried in; or, which he obtain'd by his own natural power consisting in meerly external performances. To which he opposeth *the Righteousness which is of God by Faith*: i.e. the righteousness of the new creature, wrought in him by Gods Holy Spirit and

and is an effect or fruit of believing Christ's Go spel.

II. Phil. 3. 10. *That I may know him, &c.* i. e. experimentally, in raising me up to newness of life, and in killing and mortifying all my corrupt affections.

III. Rom. 4. 5. *God justifieth the ungodly.* i. e. those that were once so: before, not at the same time when they are justified. For, to say that God can pronounce a person just and righteous, that is unjust and unrighteous, is a contradiction to his own righteousness; and makes him to pronounce a false sentence, and to do that which himself hath declared *an abomination*, Prov. 17. 5.

C.

I. **R**om. 3. 28. *A man is justified by Faith.* We shall find that justification, or remission of sins, is sometimes ascribed to other Vertues as well as to faith: but then they are understood either in so general a sense as to include Faith, or as supposing it. As, *Act. 3. 19.* to conversion and repentance: to forgiveness of Trespases, *Matth. 6. 14.* to shewing mercy, *Matth. 5. 7.* to works, or sincere Obedience, *Jam. 2. 24.* But whereas Justification is mostly attributed to *Faith*, the
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reason is, because all other Graces are Virtually contained in it; and that is the principle from whence they are derived.

II. Rom. 4. 22. *It was imputed to him for Righteousness.* His Faith (which we know was not idle but very operative) was of the same account with God, *λογισθη* it was reckoned (as in two Verses of this Chapter it is translated) or it was valued by God at as high a rate, as if it were compleat righteousness. Christ's *imputed* righteousness, or the imputation of Christ's righteousness is not to be found in all the Bible. It may be allowed in this notion: That those which are sincerely righteous, and from an inward living principle allow themselves in no known sin, nor in the neglect of any known duty (which is to be truly *Evangelically* righteous) shall be dealt with and rewarded, in and through Christ, as if they were perfectly so.

III. Phil. 2. 13. *Work, &c. For it is God which worketh in you, &c.* The Apostle here reconciles the doctrine of Gods Grace with, and shewes the indispenfability of mens endeavours, making Gods readiness to work in us to *will* by his preventing grace, and to *do* by his assisting, a motive to us to work out our own salvation.

The Fourteenth Meeting.

A.

I. **H**eb. 8. 10. *I will put my Law into their hearts, &c.* It cannot be; I will do all for them, they need do nothing at all. This would make all the precepts of the Gospel insignificant. Neither can this be the sense: I will sanctifie their natures, and so cause them to keep my Laws without their concurrence in that act: But, I will afford them my grace and spirit, whereby they co-operating therewith, and not being wilfully wanting to themselves, shall be enabled so to do. Or, I will do all that reasonable Creatures can reasonably expect from me, toward the writing of my Laws in their hearts.

II. Heb. 8. 11. *And they shall not teach every man his neighbour, &c.* i.e. There shall be no need of such pains in teaching men how they must obey the Lord, and what they are to do, as under the Law of Moses (which consisted in Observations that were only good because commanded) but the Precepts now given shall be found writen in every mans heart; so that none need be ignorant of what

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is enjoined for the substance of it, that will consult the dictates of their own nature.

III. Gal. 3. *The law was added because of transgression, &c.* The Jewish and Mosaical law (in a strict sense) was not given as any new condition, whereby they were to attain to the promises; but they should, till they were fulfilled, be restrained and kept under discipline, backt on by temporal rewards and punishments.

B.

I. **R**om. 5. 1. *Being justified by Faith.* Faith put for the doctrine of Faith, justifies as an instrument (as the Law condemneth) as it contains the Covenant of Grace, and holdeth forth pardon to sinners. Faith, as it signifies the Vertue or duty of Faith, justifies as it is the condition of the new Covenant, wherein forgiveness of sin is offer'd. God the Father is the principle efficient cause, Jesus Christ the only meritorious cause of justification.

II. Jam. 4. 8. *Clense your hands ye sinners.* The Scripture seems one while to give all to God in the work of regeneration and conversion, and another while to make it wholly mens wth act. To reconcile the places
[Clense

[Glense you—I will Glense] we must go in a middle way. I mean, that where God speaks as if he did all in this great work, we are to judge, that he supposeth mens endeavours; and where he speaks as if men were to do all, that he supposeth the concurrence and assistance of his own grace.

III. Jam. 1. 26. *He that seemeth to be Religious and bridleth not his tongue, that mans Religion is vain.* May we not justly fear upon the account of the reviling and censuring (even their superiors too) not a few of the Godly party (so called) are guilty of, that they are no better than meere pretenders to Religion, as great a profession as they make of it.

C.

I. Jam. 2. 24. *A man is justified by works, and not by Faith only.* As works signifie sincere Obedience to Christs Gospel, we cannot account it any scandal to have it said of us, that we hold Justification by works. Why should any man be more shy of acknowledging this than St. James. Nor need we so mince it, as to say that Faith justifieth our person, and works our Faith: for understanding Works, for a Working Faith, our persons (is ever they be) must be justified by them.

We must not give the Papists occasion to think, we have a slight opinion of good Works.

II. Ezech. 18. *As I live saith the Lord.* Altho God professeth kindness to all men, and saith, nay sweareth too, that he willetth not the death of sinners, but had rather they would turn from their wickedness and live: yet, according to the doctrines of some men, this is but a declaration of his *Voluntas signi*. The like to which should one assert concerning any honest man, he would think himself not a little reproached.

III. Joh. 3. 17. *God sent not his Son into the World to condemn the World.* If the doctrine of absolute Reprobation be true, our Saviours coming was to aggravate the Condemnation of the generality of men (which would be far more properly called the *World*, then a very few) for not believing in him, who never dy'd for them, so much as to put them into a possibility of being saved.

The fifteenth Meeting.

A.

HE gave himself for a ransom for many: for the *Vulgus*, or multitude of the people. So the word πολλοι which is rendred *many* doth among the Greeks most commonly signifie. And St. Paul saith, He gave himself a ransom for all, 1 Tim. 2. and did taste death for every man, Heb. 2. 9. and that he is the Saviour of all men, though especially of those that believe. And he sadly bewailed mens not coming that they might have life; and wept over Jerusalem for her obstinate persisting in unbelief, and most pathetically with tears wished, that she had known, in that her day, the things that belonged to her peace.

II. 2 Tim. 3. 2. Men shall be lovers of themselves, proud, covetous, &c. In this and other places where mens sins are foretold, instead of shall, we may put will. The shalls make those places look as if they contain'd declarations of desires, whereas wills would make them at first sight to appear that they contain onely predictions and expressions of Gods foreknowledge

knowledge, that men would commit such and such sins, not of his *Will* and purpose that they should.

III. Rom. 9. 13. *Jacob have I loved, and Esau have I hated.* This is a quotation out of *Malachy* 1. 3. Where *Esau's* person was not spoken of, but by *Esau*, his posterity, the *Edomites* are understood. He meant no more than that he less loved them than the *Israelites*, or was not so kind to them, as he was to these. Or, we may conceive, that by *hating* is to be understood very severely punishing which was after their wicked and most unnatural behaviour toward their brethren, and upon that account. See *Obad.* 10. Not what was said to *Rebecca*, that *two Nations* were in her Womb. And, *Esau* in his own person did never serve *Jacob*.

B.

I. **R**om. 9. 15. *I will have mercy on whom I will have mercy.* i.e. I will bestow my kindness where I please, without giving account to any one. And therefore God may justly accept Gentiles to his special favour, idolatrous and wicked as generally they are (for he is not obliged to damn all that deserve it) and cast off his antient people the Jew

at his pleasure, as strict observers as they are of one Law, they being disobedient to another.

II. Rom. 9. 16. *So then it is not of him that willeth &c.* i. e. From thence it is evident, that this mercy and favour of God is not the desert and prerogative of those that with great Zeal aspire to it, but in a wrong way, i. e. by the Mosaical performances, as the Jews do (See v. 3 1. 3 2.) but to be had from the Free-Grace and mercy of God by Jesus Christ.

III. Rom. 9. 17, *For this same purpose have I raised thee up.* Heb. *I have made thee stand.* Vulg. *sustentavite.* Pharoah having hardn'd his own heart, God at length saith concerning him that he would harden his heart in his just judgment, i. e. do th at which he would be further hardn'd by : and addes, that he would presently cut him off, but that he preserved him, and raised him out of great dangers, for no other end but to make him an example of his just indignation against obdurate rebels in the more signal and illustrious manner.

C.

I. **R**om. 9. 18. *Whom he will he hardneth,* We are not to understand any action of his, whereby he putteth wickedness into men, or intends, and increaseth that

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which is already in them: for then would he be the Author of sin; which to assert is the highest blasphemy: Neither Gods withdrawing all manner of necessary helps whereby sinners may be mollified: but no more than his doing such things to wicked men, which are not in their own nature, but accidentally, through their Wickedness the occasion of further hardning. And so and no otherwise, he did harden the Jews; nay, chiefly were they hardn'd by the divine forbearance.

II. U. 20. *Who art thou that repliest against God?* As for his dealing in such a manner with you, as that you become by that means more hardned, and averse to obey his Gospel, you may thank your selves for it, and therefore have no cause to object against Gods justice. 'Tis long of your own wickedness that you become more hardened by any of his providences.

III. Rom. 9. 22. *The Vessels of wrath fitted to destruction.* They are such as the Apostle saith, God endured with much long suffering; and therefore they were not made so by any absolute decree of his, but made themselves so by their wilful and free-sinning. For what long-suffering can it be, to bear with the sins of those that could never have possibly been avoided? The Apostle here asserts

asserts not any other reprobation of the Jews, then that, which wilful reprobation of the Messias was the cause of. Gods purpose to cast them off, so far as that they should be no more a distinct nation or body politick, was unchangeable: not, that none of them should come to eternal salvation.

The sixteenth Meeting.

A.

I. **J**ER. 10. 23. *The way of man is not in himself.* Our purposes sink and fail almost as soon as they are up. In matters of indifferency, and sometimes in those of the greatest Concernment; we think we resolve, when we do but think. And what strength hath such a thought against a friend and importunity:

II. **JAM.** 1. 16. *Err not*] Men are prone to error. Hence it is, that God is made more cruel then man, and yet more merciful than he is: That men are Saints, and yet the Law impossible: That imputed righteousness is all, when we have none of our own: That our Election may be sure, tho we do not make it so: That Christian liberty is let loose
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against Christ himself. That God is brought in to do himself what he doth command: That Grace is miraculous and irresistible, &c.

III. Act. 4. 12. *Tolle Augustinum de causa*, Take away the names of *Augustin*, of *Luther*, of *Calvin*, and *Arminius*, for they are but names, not arguments. There is but *one* name by which we must be saved: and his name alone must have authority and prevail with us, who is the Author and finisher of our Faith. We may honour others, and give unto them that which is theirs; but we must not deifie them, nor pull Christ out of his throne, to place them in his room.

B.

I. **M** Atth. 5:9. *Blessed are the peace-makers.* It was as wise counsel as could have been given to those who sate to solve knotty doubts, and to determine controversies in Religion in the Council at *Dort*, and it was given by a King, and it would have made good his motto, & stiled him a *peace-maker*, tho there had been nothing else to contribute to that title; *Paucissima desinienda, quia paucissima necessaria*; That they should not be too busie and earnest in defining and determining many things,

things, because so few were necessary. Questions in Divinity are like meats in this: The more delicate and subtil they are, the sooner they putrefie.

II. 1 Cor. 15. 43. I do not enquire, how the body, that shall rise, can be the same numerical body with that which did walk upon the earth: it is enough for me to know, that *it is sown in dishonour, and shall be raised in Glory*; And my business is to rise with Christ here, and make good my part in this first resurrection, for then I am secure, and need not to extend my thoughts to the end of the world to survey and comprehend the second.

III. Jude 3. It were to be wisht, that men would in Scripture-phrase speak of the acts of God (as in Justification) and not seek out divers inventions, which do not edifie, but many times shake and rend the Church in pieces, and lay the truth it self open to reproach: which had triumphed Gloriously over error, had men contended, not for their own inferences and deductions: *for that Common Faith which was once delivered to the Saints.*

C.

I. *Al. 5.6.* What profit is it busily to enquire, whether the nature of Faith, by which we are justified, consisteth in an obsequious assent, or in a more fiducial apprehension of the merits of Christ; whether it be an instrument, or condition; when I may seek and rest upon this, which every eye must needs see, That it must not be a dead, but a *Faith working by Charity*: Which is the language of Faith, and demonstrateth her to be alive. *My sheep hear my voice, saith Christ: Amen, ἀκούει τὴν φωνήν* saith *Basil*. They hear and Obey, and never dispute or ask questions: they taste and not trouble and mud that clear water of life. Men talk of Faith and the power of it, and are worse than infidels; of Justification, and please themselves in unrighteousness; of Christs active Obedience, and are to every good work reprobate; of his passive Obedience, and deny him when they should suffer for him; of the inconsistency of Faith and good works in their Justification, and set them at as great a distance in their lives and conversations.

II. *Gal. 5.24.* Certainly it would be more safe for us, and more worthy our calling, to be

be diligent and sincere in that which is plainly revealed ; to believe, and in the strength and power of that Faith *to crucifie our flesh with the affections and lusts*, then to be drawing out of schemes and measuring out the actions and operations of God. For then our work is done, and *all Gods promises are Yea and Amen*, and fall close with the performance of our duty.

III. 2 Cor. 10. 5. It is necessary to bring in to captivity every thought to the Obedience of Christ, but it is not necessary to be under this or that discipline, tho' the best, further then in affection and desire. For, in the midst of the changes and chances of this world, we cannot be what we would, nor be govern'd as we please.

The Eighteenth Meeting.

A.

I. **R** Ev. 2. 10. All art and endeavour hath been used by many, to make themselves great on earth ; the one half of which might have wrought out a crown for them in a better place. For that may be had if we will, and if we be Faith-
full

ful to the death it will fall upon our heads.

III. 1 Cor. 2.7. Rom. 16.25. *We speak* saith S. Paul, *the Wisdome of God in a mystery*, the hidden Wisdome, and the Gospel is *the revelation of that mystery*. And if it be revealed, it is no longer hidden: if it be known, as *fast as it is known it is not a mystery*: And if it were yet a hidden mystery it could not concern us; because that can have no influence upon our will which yeildeth no light at all to our understanding. Mysteries when they are hidden are to us as nothing: I know now no mysteries in Divinity: for it is agreed on all hands, that whatsoever is necessary to the end is perspicuous and naked to the understanding. I may say, *mystical Divinity is an art of teaching nothing, of moving and standing still; an art of filling men with empty speculations.*

III. Job. 12.20. When power speaks, every mouth must be stopped, Logick hath no sinewes, an argument no strength, Antiquity no authority, Councils may err, the Fathers were but Children, all Churches must yield to one, and the first Age be taught by the last: *Speech is taken away from the crafty, and understanding from the aged.*

B.

I. **P**sal. 49. 20. We were enemies to God, fallen from our first honour, and made like the beasts that perish. But now, by Christs assimilation to us we are made like unto God; we are exalted by his humiliation, raised by his descent, magnified by his minoration.

II. Heb. 11. 17. *Wherefore in all things it becometh him to be made like unto his brethren.* Each answereth other: Christ made like unto men: and again, Men made like unto him, so like that they are brethren. Christ made like in all things, which fill up the office of a Redeemer; and men made like unto God in all things, which may be required at the hands of those who are Redeemed. There is a kind of Convertency in these terms, *Christ and his Brethren.* Christ like unto his brethren, and these brethren like unto Christ. *Christ is ours, and we are Christs.* 1 Cor. 3. 23.

III. Psal. 52. 9. Lay us in the ballance, *We are lighter than vanity it self.* *And yes it is so,* Men fallen below the Condition of men, Lame and impotent, not able to move one step in the wayes of Glory, Living dead men.

Three Ministers

men. Who will now stand up for us? Who but he, who *is the Captain of our salvation.* Heb. 3. 10.

C.

I. **I** Sa. 5. 8. *The Captain of our salvation* is the true Son of God begotten not made; the *brightness* of the Father, streaming from him as light from light; his *Image*, not according to his humane nature, but according to his divine: the *Image and Character*, not of any qualities in God, but of his person; the true stamp of his substance, begotten as brightness from the light, as the character from the type, as the word from the mind: which yet do not fully declare him. *Quis enarrabit? Who shall declare his generation.* The manner is known only to the Father who begat, and to the Son who is begotten. Thy Faith is thy honour: a great favour it is that thou art taught to believe that he is the eternal begotten Son of God.

II. Joh 1. 14. *The Word was made flesh.* As the soul and body, tho two distinct natures, grow into one man; so did the God-head assume the man-hood without confusion of the *natures*, or distinction of the *persons*.
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They are united as the *Sun and light*, as a grass to a plant: As in a *fiery Sword* there are two distinct natures, the fire and the sword; two distinct acts, to cut and to burn; and two distinct effects, cutting and burning; from whence ariseth one common effect, to cut burning, and to burn cutting. This must be tasted *cum grano salis*, and seasoned with a sober application. For there is some resemblance, but great disproportion.

III. 1 Pet. 1. 12. *The Angels themselves* those second lights, wax dim with admiration, and their holy desire is to *stoop and bow down and look into this mystery*. All the representations the wit of man can find out, cannot express it, but they leave us still in our gaze and wonder, whilst the *manner* of it is hid from our eyes. Those beasts which came too near to this *mountain*, this high mystery, were *strucken through with a dart*, and staggerd in the very attempt,

The Eighteenth Meeting.

A.

I. **J**oh. 5. 39. *Search the Scriptures: for they are they that testifie of Christ.*
 They testifie that he was God blessed for evermore: That that word which was God was also made flesh: That he was the Son of God and the Son of man. The manner how the two distinct natures are united is unsearchable and unfordable: and the knowledge of it, if our narrow understanding could recieve it, would not add one hair to our stature and growth in Grace. That Christ is God and man, that the two natures are united in the Person of thy Saviour and Mediator, is enough for thee to know, and to raise thy nature up to him.

II. Joh. 17. 24. *Father,, I will that they whom thou hast given me (and he gives him none but those who are like him) be where I am.* Heaven hath received him; and it will receive none but those who are like him, holy as he is Holy just as he is just, humble as he is humble: not those that name him; not those who set his name to
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their fraud, to their malice, to their perjury, to their oppression; not those many Anti-Christ's, whose whole life is a Contradiction to him.

III. In the volumn of the book it is written of him, and in the same volumn we shall find it written of us, that we should *do Gods will*, and *have his Law in our hearts*. And in this, as in other things, our first thought, should be what will become us. An humble Christ, and a proud Christian; an Obedient Christ, and a traiterous Christian; Christ fasting, and a Christian riding, *non bene conveniunt*, there is no *decorum* in it, nothing but absurdity and incongruity.

B.

I. **L**uk. 16. Is it necessary to be rich? Behold *Dives* in hell, and *Lazarus* in *Abrahams bosom*. Is it necessary to be noble? *Not many noble are chosen*: Is it necessary to be learned? *Where is the Scribe? where is the Disputer of this World?* 1 Cor. 1.

II. Psal. 72. 18. When we say, *He only can do wondrous works*; When in all humility we acknowledge, that he can do more than we can think; that he can uphold us when we are ready to fall, enrich us in our poverty,

strengthen us in weakness, supply us with all necessary means and encouragements in this race; when we believe and rely on it, that he can tread down all our enemies, and bind Satan in chains; that he is able to immortalize our flesh, to raise us out of the dust and set us in heavenly places; we need not set our Songs and *Hallelujahs* to a higher note.

III. Rom. 8. 32. *He that spared not his own Son, &c.* He that giveth his Son, will also give salvation: And he that giveth salvation, will give all things that may work it out. It is impossible it should be otherwise, Christ cometh not naked, but clothed with blessings: He cometh not empty, but with the riches of Heaven, the treasures of wisdom and happiness: Christ cometh not alone, but with troops of Angels, with glorious promises and blessings. Nay, to make it unanswerable, it is his nakedness that clotheth us, his poverty that enricheth us, his no reputation that ennobleth us, his minoration that maketh us great, and his exinanition and emptying of himself that filleth us, and his being delivered for us delivereth to us the possession of all things.

C.

I. Joh. 3. 16. So God loved the world, &c.

Must the Son of God be delivered?

Love sendeth him down. *Charitas de celo demisit Christum.* It was love that bowed the heavens, when he descended. Must he suffer?

Love nailed him to the cross, and no power could do it but love. Must he be sacrificed?

Love calleth it *a baptism*, and is straitned till the sacrifice be slain. Must he dye? Must the

Son of God dye? Love calls it *τελειωσις* his perfection. Heb. 7. 10.

II. Mark. 14. 36. The bitter ingredients, so filled up his Cup, that he made it his Prayer to have it *taken out of his hand*. The consideration of which truth induced some to conceive that sense of pain had so weakned his intellectual faculties that he forgot himself. *Non fuit hæc meditata Christi oratio*, Calv. But we may truly say, *Non fuit hæc interpretis meditata oratio*: that would leave Wisdom itself without the use of it. No question it was the language of a bleeding heart, and the resuriance of grief. There was no disorder, no sullenness in it.

III. Matth. 26. 39. He prayed, *Let this Cup pass from me*: But that was not, as some

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think,

think, the Cup of his Cross and Passion but the Cup of his agony. And in that prayer it is plain he was heard; For *there appeared an Angel unto him from heaven to strengthen him* Luk. 22.43.

The Nineteenth Meeting.

A.

I. **M** Atth. 27.46. *Why hast thou forsaken me:* God in a manner forsok him, restrained his influence, denied relief, withdrew comfort, stood as it were a far off, and let him fight it out unto death.

II. Tit. 3.4. We must seek the true cause in the bosome of the Father, nay in the bowels of his Son, and there see, why he was delivered for us written in his heart: It was *φιλαργία*, the love of God to mankind. *Delexisti me, Domine, plusquam te, quando mori voluisti pro me.* August. Such a high esteem did he set upon a Soul, which we scarce honour with a thought but so live as if we had none.

III. Esai. 53.5. *He was wounded for our transgressions.* Our sins nailed him to the cross,

cross, which not only crucified him in his humility, but crucifie him still in his glory, now he sitteth at the right hand of God, & put him to shame to the end of the world. *Falso de Judeis querimur.* Why complain we of the Jewes malice? or *Judas's* treason? or *Pilats* injustice? We, we are they, who crucified the Lord of Life. Our treachery was the *Judas* which betray'd him: Our malice, the Jewes which accus'd him: Our perjury, the false witness against him: Our injustice, the *Pilate* that condemn'd him: Our pride scorn'd him: Our envy grinned at him: Our luxury spate upon him, Our Coveteousness sold him.

B.

I. **R**om. 8. 32. *For us all.* All, not considered as elect, or reprobate; but as men, as sinners. For that name will take in all, for *all have sinned*: some turn *all* into *few*, make the *World* not the world, and *whosoever* not whosoever, but some certain men; deduct whom they please out of all people, nations, and out of Christendome it self: leave some few with Christ upon the Cross, whose persons he beareth, whom they call the elect, and mean themselves.

F 4

II. Joh.

II. Joh. 3. 16. *God so loved the World, i.e. the Elect, say they: They are the World; where it is hard to find them, for they are called out of it. And the best light we have, which is the Scripture, discovereth them not unto us in that place. If the Elect be the World which God so loved, then they are such Elect as may not believe; such elect as may perish, and whom God will have perish if they do not believe. It is true, none have benefit of Christ's death but the elect: but from hence it doth not follow that none might have had.*

III. 1 Tim 4. 10. *God is the Saviour of all men, but especially of them that believe. All, if they believe and repent; and those who are Obedient to the Gospel, because they do. The blood of Christ is poured forth on the Believer, and with it he sprinkleth his heart, and is saved; the Wicked trample it under their feet and perish.*

C.

I. 2 **P**et. 3. 9. *God would not that any should perish. In this all agree: both hold up the priviledge of a believer, and leave the rod of the Stubborn impenitent to fall upon him: The death of Christ is not ap-
plied*

plied to all, say some: *It is not for all*, say others. *The Virtue of Christ's meritorious passion is not made use of by all*, say some. *It was never intended that it should*, say others. The event is the same: For if it be not made use of and applyed, it is as if it were not, as if it had never been obtained.

II. Joh. 3. 19. *This is the condemnation that light came into the world, &c.* The Indians live at the very rising of the Sun, yet their bodies are black, and swarthy, and resemble the night: So, many there be who live in the very region of light, where the beams fall upon them hot and pure, and are darted at their very eyes, and yet they remain the Children of darkness. *Facit infidelitas multorum ut Christus non pro omnibus moriatur, qui pro omnibus mortuus est.* Amb. Infidelity and impenitence are the worst restrictives, that contract and sink all into a few.

III. Heb. 1. 3. *Christ is the brightness of his glory.* And if we do not still Love darkness, and make it a pavilion round about us; he will look upon us through this light, and look lovingly upon us with favour and affection.

The

The Twentieth Meeting.

A.

I. 1 **C**OR. 3. 21. *All things are yours,* when you are Christs. There is a civil dominion and right to these things: and this we have *jure Creationis*, by right of Creation. For the earth is the Lords, and he hath given it to the Sons of men. And there is an evangelical dominion; not the power of having them, but the power of using of them to Gods Glory; that they may be a gift: and this we have *jure adoptionis*, by right of adoption; as the Sons of God, begotten in Christ.

II. 2 COR. 4. 4. St. Paul calls the Devil, *the God of this World*: and Worldings in effect make him so: For as if he had been lifted up and nailed to the cross for them, to him every knee doth bow: nor will they receive the true Messias but in his shape: they conceive him giving gifts, not spiritual but temporal, not the graces of the Spirit, humility, meekness and Contentedness; but Silver and gold; making not Saints, but Kings upon the earth.

III. 1 COR. 3. 21. With Christ we have *all things*

things, which work to that end for which he was deliver'd. We have his commands, which are the pledges of his Love: We have his promises of immortality and eternal life: He hath given Faith, to apprehend and receive the promises, and hope to lift us up unto them: He hath given us his Pastors to teach us: He hath given us his Angels to minister unto us: He hath given us his Spirit, and filled us with his Grace, if we will receive it, which will make his commands which are now grievous, easie, which may carry us on in a regular and peaceable course of piety and obedience; all those things we have with Christ.

B.

I. **G**AL. 6. *I am crucified with Christ.* Let us receive Christ in his shame, in his Sorrow, in his Agony, take him hanging on the cross; take him, and take a pattern by him: that as he was, so we may be troubled for our sins; that we may mingle our tears with his blood, drag sin to the bar, accuse and condemn it, revile and spit in its face at the fairest presentment it can make, and then nail it to the cross; that it may languish and faint by degrees, till it give up the Ghost and dye in us. II. Heb.

II. Heb. 7. 26. *Such a High Priest became us*, who is not onely merciful, but just: not onely meek; but powerful: not onely fair, but terrible; not onely clothed with the darkness of humility, but with the shining robes of majesty; who can dye and can live again, (*Revel. 1. 18.*) and live for evermore; who suffered himself to be judged and condemned, and shall judge and condemn the world it self.

III. Luk. 24. 26. *Tota Ecclesia cum Christo computatur ut una persona*: Christ and his Church are in computation but one person. He ought to suffer, and they ought to suffer: they suffer in him, and he in them, to the end of the World. Nor is any other method answerable, either to his infinite Wisdome and Justice, which hath set it down in indelible Characters; or to our mortal and frail condition, which must be bruised before it can be healed, and be levelled with the ground before it can be raised up. That which is convenient for Christ, is profitable for us. That which becometh him, we must wear as an ornament of grace unto our head. There is an *oportet* set upon both: He ought, and we ought, first to suffer, and then to enter into glory, to dye first, that we may rise again.

C

I. **H** Eb. 4. 15. and 2. 17. There is life in Christ's death, and comfort in his sufferings. For *we have not such an High Priest* who will not help us, but (which is one and a chief end of his suffering and death) *Who is touched with the feeling of our infirmities, and is merciful and faithful:* hath not onely power (for that he may have and not shew it) but will and propension also, desire and diligent care to hold up them who are ready to fall, & to bring them back, who were ever brought to the gates of death. He hath *Learnt* compassion by his sufferings and death. For the way to be sensible of anothers misery, is first to feel it ourselves.

II. Joh 20. 29. *Blessed are they who have not seen, and yet have believed.* Why should the Resurrection of Christ be made manifest to the eye? this is not to seek to confirm and establish, but to destroy our Faith. For if these truths were as evident as it is that the Sun doth shine, when it is day, the apprehension of them were not an act of our faith but of our knowledge. Therefore Christ shew'd not himself openly to all the people at his resurrection; *ut fides non mediocri præmio destinata,*

stinata, non nisi difficultate constaret, Tertul. That Faith, by which we are destin'd to a Crown, might not consist without some difficulty, but commend it self by our Obedience; the perfection and beauty whereof is best seen in making its way through difficulties.

III. Joh. 7. 48. *Did any of the Pharisees believe in him?* And the reason of this is plain: For the Faith be an act of the understanding, yet it dependeth upon the Will, and men are incredulous, not for want of those means which may raise a Faith, but for want of Will to follow that light, which leadeth to it: they do not believe because they will not, and so bear themselves strongly upon opinion preconceived, beyond the strength of all evidence whatsoever. When affections and lusts are high and stand out against it, the evidence is put by and forgot, and the Object, which calls for our eye and Faith, begins to disappear and vanish, and at last is nothing.

To be one and twentieth Meeting.

A.

I. **C**ol. 3.3. *Our life, saith the Apostle, is hid with Christ in God: And whilst we leave it there by a continual meditation of his meritorious suffering, by a serious and practical application of his glorious Resurrection, we hide it in the bosom of Majesty, and no dart of Satan can reach it*

II. 1 Tim. 3.5. and 5.17. *The pastors are set a part in Christs stead to minister to his Church, yea to rule and govern his Church. And they carry about with them his commission, a power delegated from him to sever the Goats from the Sheep, even in this life, that they may become Sheep, to segregate them, to abstain or withhold them, to exanctorate them, to throw them out, to strike then with the pastoral rod, to anathematize hem, &c. This was the language of the first and purest times. By degrees this power fell in its esteem through some abuse of it, it being drawu down from that most profitable and necessary end, for which it was given: and this at last brought all Religion into disgrace.*

III. Job.

III. Job. 18. 14. *Death is a King of terrors:* But Christians, having the divine Image restored in them, are secure and fear it not. For what can that Tyrant take from them? Their life? That is hid with Christ in God. It cannot cut them off from pleasures: for their delight is in the Lord. It cannot rob them, of their treasure. For that is laid up in Heaven. It can take nothing from them but what themselves have already crucified, their flesh. It cannot cut off one hope, one thought, one purpose: for all their thoughts, purposes and hopes, were levell'd not on this but in another life.

B.

I. **L**uk. 19. 41. *shall Christ shed his Blood* for his Church, that it may be one with him, and at unity in it self, and canst thou not drop a tear when thou seest this his body thus rent in pieces, as it is at this day? when thou seest the world, the love of the World, break in and make such havock in the Church (Oh it is a sad Contemplation!) will none but *Christ weep over Jerusalem?*

II. Rom. 10. 10. *He that believeth from the heart* cannot but be obedient to the Gospel: Unless we can imagine, there can be any man that

that can so hate himself as deliberately to cast himself into hell, and run from happiness, when it appeareth in so much Glory.

III. *Act. 2. 1. when the day of Pentecost was Come.* Every day to a Christian is a day of Pentecost: his whole life a continued holy day, wherein the Holy Ghost descendeth, both as an Instructor and as a Comforter, secretly and sweetly by his word characterizing the Soul, and imprinting saving knowledge; not forcing or drawing by violence, but sweetly leading and guiding us into all truths.

E.

I. *Joel. 2. 28. I will pour out my Spirit upon all flesh.* Christ's Advent was for the fulfilling of the Law, and the Spirits for the fulfilling and compleating of the Gospel: Christ's advent, to Redeem the Church; and the Spirits, to teach the Church: Christ, to shed his blood; and the Spirit, to wash and purge it in his blood; Christ, to pay down the ransom for us Captives; and the Spirit, to knock off our fetters: Christ to preach the acceptable year of the Lord, and the Spirit, to interpret it.

G

H. Joh.

II. Joh. 16. 13. *He will guide you into all truth.* *Ille, He,* designeth a certain person, and *Ille, He,* in Christs mouth, a distinct person from himself. Besides we are taught in the Schools, *Actiones sunt suppositorum*, Actions and operations are of persons.

III. Joh. 16. 13. *The Spirit of Truth.* We may be zealous, and not cruel; devout, and not superstitious: we may hate Idolatry, and not commit sacrilege; stand fast in our Christian liberty, and not make it a cloak of maliciousness, if we did follow the Spirit in all his ways, who in all his ways is a Spirit of Truth. For he Commandeth zeal, & forbiddeth rage; he commendeth devotion, & forbiddeth superstition; he condemneth Idolatry, yea, and condemneth sacrilege; he preacheth liberty, and preacheth obedience to superiors, and in all is *the same Spirit.*

The two and Twentieth Meeting.

A.

I. Joh. 20. 21. *As my Father sent me,* **J**our Saviour to his Disciples, *so send you.* And he sendeth us too, who are *hereditarii Christi discipuli*, Christs disci-

plus by inheritance and succession; that every one, as he is endowed from above, should serve him by serving one another. And though serving him cannot deserve that name, yet is he pleased to call it *helping him*: that we should help him to feed the hungry, to guide the blind, and teach the ignorant; and so be Christs *Vicars*, as the Spirit is Christ's.

II. 1 Tim. 1. 10. *He brought Life and Immortality to light.* For whatsoever the Prophets and great Rabbies had spoken of immortality, was but darkness in comparison of this great light.

III. 1 Cor. 2. 2. *I determined to know nothing but Christ and him crucified.* Here his desire hath a *non ultra*. This truth is all: this joyneth Heaven and Earth together, God and Man, mortality and immortality, misery and happiness in one, draweth us near unto God, and maketh us one with him.

B.

I. E Ph. 2. 8. Faith is called *the gift of God*, not onely because it is given to every believer (and too many are too willing to stay till it be given) but because the Spirit first found out the way to save us by so weak a means as Faith. And as he first found it out, so he

G 2

teacheth

teacheth it, and leaveth out nothing; not a tittle, not an Iota, which may serve to complement and perfect this divine Science.

II. Joh, 16. 13. — into all Truth. The Spirit (in the Gospel) hath framed rules and precepts to order and regulate all the faculties of our soul, in every act, in every motion and inclination: if the Eye offend, pluck it out: if the Hand, cut it off: Rules, which limit the Understanding to the knowledge of God, bind the Will to obedience, moderate and confine our affections, level our hope, fix our Joy, stint our Sorrow; frame our Speech, compose our Gesture, Fashion our Apparel, set and methodize our outward Behaviour.

III. 1 Cor. 13. The acts of Charity are manifest. Charity suffereth long, even injuries and errors; but doth not rise up against that which was set up to enlarge and improve her. Charity is not rash, to beat down every thing that had its first rise and beginning from Charity. Charity is not puffed up, swelleth not against a harmless; yea, and an useful constitution, tho it be of man. Charity seeketh not her own, treadeth not the publick peace under foot to procure her own. Charity thinketh no evil, doth not see a serpent under every leaf, nor Idolatry in every bough of devotion. If we were Charitable, we could not but be peaceable.

C.

I. **R**epent and believe the Gospel. See God hath shut up Eternity within the compalls of two words, *Believe and Repent*, the sum of all he taught. Lay your foundation right, and then build upon it. Because God loved you in Christ, do you love him in Christ: Love him and keep his Commandments, than which no other way could have been found out to draw you near unto God. *Believe and Repent* - this is all. What malice, what defiance, what gall and bitterness amongst Christians? yet this is all, *Believe and Repent*. Every part of Christendom almost is a stage of war, and this pretence is writron in their banners, you may see it waving in the air: *For God and Religion*: yet this is all, *Believe and Repent*. Who would once think, there should be such wars and fighting amongst Christians for that which is shut up and brought unto us in these two words, *Believe and Repent*, for this is the Gospel of Christ, this is the whole will of God:

II. Act, 10. 34. *Of a truth I perceive, that God is no respecter of persons*; i. e. that now the partition wall is broken down, that Jew and Gentile are both alike, and the Church
 G 3 which

which was formerly shut up in *Judea*, is now become *Catholick*: a body which every one that will may be a member of.

III. Eph. 2. 20. Christ sent his Apostles to make us Christians, to make that which he taught them a Rule of life and to fix it on the Church as on a Pillar, that all might read it, that none should add to it, or take away from it. And for this they are called a *foundation*, and we are said to be built upon them, Jesus Christ being the head corner stone.

The threeand Twentieth Meeting.

A.

I. I **J**oh. 4. 1. Believe not every Spirit. Our present Age hath shew'd us many who, tho very ignorant, yet are wiser than their teachers, so *Spiritual*, that they despise the Word of God which is the dictate of the Spirit. If they murder, the Spirit moves their hand and drew their sword; if they throw down Churches, it is with the breath of the Spirit: if they would bring in parity the pretence is, the Spirit cannot endure that any should be supreme. Our humour, c

madness, our malice, our violence, our implacable bitterness, our railing and reviling, must all go for *Inspirations of the Spirit*.

II. 1 Joh. 4. 2. *Every Spirit, that confesseth that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh, is of God.* i.e. Whosoever striveth to advance the kingdom of Christ, and to set up the Spirit against the flesh; to magnifie the Gospel, to promote men in their wayes of innocency and perfect obedience (which infallibly lead to happiness) is from God. Every such *Inspiration* is from the Spirit of God.

III. Matth. 7. 20. *By their Fruits ye shall know them.* Their hypocrisie, as well and cunningly wrought as it is, is but poor cobweb lawn, and we may easily see through it: We may see these Spiritual men sweating and toiling for the flesh, these spirits digging in the minerals, and making hast to be rich. Sure *I am the Spirit of Truth* looketh upward, moveth upward, directeth upward to those things which are above; and if we follow him, neither our doctrine nor our actions will ever favour of this dung.

B.

I. 2. **C**Or. 4. 2. *If the truth be bid, is it bid to them that perish.* If we have eyes to see her, she is a fair object, as visible as the Sun. If we do but love the truth, the Spirit of truth is ready to take us by the hand, and lead us to it: but those that withdraw themselves doth his Soul hate.

II. Prov. 2. 4. *If thou seekest her as Silver, &c.* Truth is best bought when it costeth us most: it must be wooed oft, and seriously, and with great devotion. To Love seven years are but a few days, (Gen. 29.) great burdens are but small, and labour is a pleasure. When we walk in the region of truth, viewing it and delighting in it, gathering what may be for our use, we walk as in a Paradise. Never did any rise up early, and in good earnest travel toward it, but he was brought to his journey's end.

III. Eph. 1. 5. God dispenseth all things according to the good pleasure of his Will. And certainly he will not lead thee, if thou wilt not follow; he will not teach thee, if thou wilt not learn: Nor can we think that the Truth will be sown in every ground, and as Devils tares grow up in us whilst we sleep.

C.

C.

I. **M**atth. 6. 33. *Seek ye first the Kingdome of God*; And in that Kingdome every thing in its order. There is something first, and something next to be observed. We must keep a set Course in our studies and proceedings.

II. Heb. 6. 1. The Apostle tells us of *principles of doctrine*, which must be learned before we can be led forward to perfection, of *milk* and of *strong meat*, of plainer lessons, before we reach at higher mysteries. Most Christians are perfect too soon, which is the reason why they are never perfect.

III. Heb. 11. 6. *Without Faith it is impossible to please God*. It is true: but without justice and honesty Faith is but a name. For can we imagine that Religion should turn Theif, and Devotion a Cutpurse?

The four and Twentieth Meeting

A.

I. **M**Ich. 6. 6. Shall I come before him with burnt offerings? 'Tis in effect, I must not do it. The question maketh the denial more strong. That which is Religion hath so little relation to it, that it can subsist without it, and most times hath been swallowed up and lost in it. It was in the World, before any Command came forth for sacrifice; and it is now most glorious when every Altar is thrown down, and hath the sweetest savour now there is no other smoke.

II. Jer. 7. 22. I spake not to your Fathers concerning burnt offerings. They were before they were enjoined, and the Fathers offer'd them up out of a voluntary affection to the honour of God, devoting that unto him, which was with them of highest esteem. God did not Command, but did accept them for the zeal and affection wherewith they were offer'd, being in themselves neither good nor evil.

III. Gal. 4. 10. Joh. 4. 20. The Ceremonies

nies were confined to time and Place. *You observe days and months*, saith the Apostle. Yea, and they observed places too: *Ye say that Jerusalem is the place*, saith the woman of Samaria to our Saviour. But that, which is truly good and in it self, is of that Nature that *Time and place* hath no power or influence on it. It is never out of season, never out of place. Every day, every hour, every minute is the good mans sabbath and rest. The Church is the place & the market is the place, and the prison may be the place: nay Sodom it self. And it is the greatest Commendation to be good among the worst.

B.

I. **I** Sai. i. 15. *Will I be pleased with thousands of rams?* i.e. I will not. We may then learn thus much from the Prophets question, That the *Ceremonious* part of Gods worship tho enoynd by God and performed most exactly by men, yet if it be not driven to that end, for which it was commanded, is so far from finding acceptance with God that it is odious and hateful in his sight.

II. Isa. 64. 4. *All our righteousnesses* (he meaneth formal and counterfeit righteousness) *is as a menstruous Cloath.*

III. Matth.

III. Matth. 25. *Come ye blessed, &c.* The form or reason is not for you have sacrificed, ye have fasted often, ye have heard much, &c. yet these are holy duties, but they are *ordinata in alind*, ordained for those that follow For I was hungry, and ye gave, &c. Then the outward worship hath its Glory and reward, when it draweth the inward along with it: when I sacrifice and obey, hear and do, pray and endeavour, contemplate and practise, fast and repent.

C.

I. Joh. 3. 5. *Except ye be baptized, &c.* It is not absolutely necessary to be baptiz'd, but it is necessary to cleanse our selves from sin. S. *Augustin* thought, not to be baptized was to be damned: and therefore was forced to create a new hell, and to find out *vitam damnationem*, more fit, as he thought, for the tenderness of *Infants*.

II. Matth. 12. 34. The moral man, that keepeth the Commandments is not far from the kingdom of God: and he that is a Christian, and buildeth up his morality, and justice and mercy upon his Faith in Christ, shall enter in and have a mansion there, when speculative and Seraphic Hypocrites shall be shut out doors.

I I. Luk.

III. Luk. 16. 25. *Thou hast received thy good things, Saith Abraham to Dives: good things, but thine, such as thy lusts esteemed so: thy good things and such good things, as have helpt to hurry thee to this place of torment.*

The five and Twentieth Meeting.

A.

I. **P** Sal. 24. 1. *The World is the Lords* (and the world is the Souls) *and all that therein is: And to behold the Creature, and in the world, as in a book, to study and find out the Creator, to contemplate his Majesty, his goodness, his wisdom, and to discover that happiness which is prepared for it; this is the proper act of the soul for which it was made, this, this alone was proportion'd to it.*

II. 2 Tim. 1. 13. *The form of Sound words,* Erasmus (*Præf. ad Hieron.*) will tell us, that Religion was never more sincere and incorrupt, than when they used but one Creed, and that a short one.

III. Isai. 13. 3. *Let us not seek our peace in false and deceitful, but in true and real goods, such as fill and satisfy: here let us let down our*

our pitchers, and draw Waters out of this well of Salvation; even those waters which will sweeten our miseries, and give a pleasant taste to bitterness it self.

B.

I. **E** Ph 5. 14. *Awake thou that sleepest in Sloth and idleness; thou that sleepest in a tempest, in the midst of thy unruly and turbulent passions; arise from thy grave and sepulcher wherein thy sloth hath intombed thee, where so many vicious habits have shut thee up. Christ shall give thee light, if not to know the uncertain (yet certain) ways of Gods providence, yet to know the certain and infallible way to bliss.*

II. Psal. 100. 3. *It is he that hath made us not we, our selves:* And he made us to this end, to his glory, to be united to himself, to bow under his power, to be conformed to his will; and so to gain a title to that happiness, which is ready to meet them that run unto it by doing what he requireth at their hands.

III. Psal. 139. 14. *I am fearfully and wonderfully made, saith David, marvellously made, excellently made,*
 let

Let a part, selected from all the other Creatures. *My members were curiously wrought, drawn as with a needle (so the word signifies) embroidered with all variety, as with divers Colours, every part fitted for its use.*

C.

I. **R**om. 3. 13. He doth not say, *All must sin*; but, *All have sinned*. For both the *Gentiles* might have kept the Law of nature, and were punished because they did not, as it is plain, Rom. 1. and the *Jews* might have kept that law, which was given to them as far as God requir'd it. *David, Asa, Josias*, kept the Law, so far as that God was pleas'd to accept it as a full payment. *Augustin*, *It is in our power to do what God requireth (cum Dei adjutorio) by the help of Grace.*

II. Matth. 11. 30. *My yoke is easie, saith our Saviour, and my burden is light.* For it is fitted to our necks and shoulders, and it is so far from taking from our nature, or pressing it with violence, that it exalteth and perfecteth it. There is love and hope to sweeten them and make them easie and pleasant.

III. 1 Cor. 2. 15. Wicked men, if an eye of flesh may judge, are the greatest favourites

rits of God: But the spiritual man judgeth all things; and to his eye they are but a sad and rueful spectacle, as condemned men led with musick to execution.

The six and Twentieth Meeting.

A.

I. **G**AL. 6. 12. We are as so many looking glasses, which present the actions of men in power back upon themselves, doing in all as they do, and all to gain our peace, or, lest we should suffer persecution for the Cross of Christ. The denial of our own will is not a thing of such difficulty as it is thought. We may do that for Gods cause, which we do for our own.

II. Eph. 4. 25. Wherefore cast off lying, &c. The reason follows, For we are members one of another. Thou art a part of him; and he is a part of thee, being both hewn out of the same rock, formed and shaped of the same mold. Therefore by lying to thy brother, thou puttest a cheat upon thy self; and as far as in thee lieth, upon that God that made you both, & gave you tongues not to ly but to instruct, and will not to deceive but counsel and help one another.

II. Matth.

III. Matth. 10. 3. *Beware of men.* A strange caution it is from him who so loved men, that he dyed for them. Beware of men transformed and *Brutified*. That smiling friend may be a tempter: he that calleth himself a Saint may be a seducer: his oyley tongue may wound thee, and his embrace crush thee to pieces.

B.

I. **M**atth. 7. 12. *This is the Law and the Prophets.* Upon this Law of Nature depend the Law and the Prophets. Or, this is the sum of all which the Law and the Prophets have taught, to wit, concerning justice and honesty, and those mutual offices and duties of men to men.

II. Heb. 11. 1. *Faith is the substance* and expectation of a future and better condition: but we do not use to expect a thing, and have no eye upon the *means* of attaining it. Can we expect to fly without wings, or go a journey without feet? No more can we hope ever to enter those heavens wherein dwelleth righteousness, without righteousness.

III. Mar. 7. 11. The Pharisees taught Children to say to their Father and Mother, *Corban*: which is not a Curse, as some have ima-

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gined, but their craft and policy : to teach children, which were offended with their parents, to consecrate their wealth to the *Treasury*, that so they might avoid that other Law, which bound them to supply their parents in want and distress.

C.

I. **R**om. 13. 13. *Let us walk honestly, as in the day*; and not after those blind Guides, the Love of our selves, and the glory of the World; which will lead us on pleasantly for a while, and at last slip from us and leave us in the dark, there to lament and curse the folly of our ways.

II. 1 Joh. 2. 11. *He that hateth his brother walketh in darkness*: that he cannot see a man in a man, nor a brother in a brother; a man in the same shape, and built up of the same materials, a man of the same passions with himself.

III. Psal. 19. 2. *Day unto Day teacheth knowledge*: and every act of piety is apt to promote and to produce a *Second*, to beget more light, which may yet lead us further from truth to truth, till at last we be brought to that happy citate, which hath no shadow of falsehood.

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III

The seven and Twentieth Meeting.

A.

I. 2 **T**Im. 3. 5. *Having a form of godliness but denying the power thereof.* As vines & other fruit-trees bear the less fruit, when they are suffered to luxuriate & spend their sap upon superfluous suckers and abundance of leaves: so commonly we may observe both in civil conversation where there is great store of *formality*, there is little sincerity, and in Religion, where there is a decay of true and cordial piety, there men entertain and please themselves with external formalities and performances.

II. Joh. 14. 15. *If ye Love me keep my commandments.* This is not the office of a friend to bewail a dead friend with vain lamentations: *sed que voluerit meminisse, que mandaverit exsequi*: to remember what he desires and execute what he commands: so said a dying Roman to his friend: And so saith our Saviour to us, To love him is not to profess kindness, but to perform Obedience to him.

III. 1 Joh. 3. 17. *He that shutteth up his bowels*
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bowels, &c. He that keepeth from any brother in Christ, that which his brother wants, and *he* wants not, doth but vainly think that he loves God, and therefore vainly hope that God loves him.

B.

I. **M**atth. 18. 3. *Except ye become as little Children.* Christ requires of men humility, like to that of little Children, and that under the highest pain of damnation. That is, that we should no more over-value our selves, or desire to be highly esteemed by others, no more under-value; scorn or despise others; no more affect pre-eminence over others, than little Children do, before we have put that *pride* into them, which afterward we charge wholly upon their natural Corruption.

II. Matth. 3. 2. *Repent for the Kingdom &c.* Much better, because freer from ambiguity, *Amend your lives, μετανοετε.* That repentance to which remission of sins and salvation is promised is perpetually expressed in the word μετανοεα, which signifieth a thorough change of the heart and soul, of the life and actions.

III. Duet. 23. 9. *When thou goest to war*
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with thine enemies, then take heed there be no wicked thing in thee: Not onely no wickedness in the cause thou maintainest, nor no wickedness in the means by which thou maintainest it, but no personal impieties in the persons that maintain it; lest the goodness of their cause sink under the burthen of their sins.

C.

Luk. 24. 47. That repentance and remission of sins should be preached in his name. The condition of the new Covenant, to which remission of sins is promised is expressed by the word *μετάνοια*. Which if ye compare that in S. Matth. 28. teaching them to observe all, you will see that what our Saviour calls in one place *μετάνοια* Repentance, that in the other he calls *observing* all that he hath commanded: Which, if Repentance were no more but sorrow for sin, and intending to leave it, certainly he neither could nor would have done.

II. Act. 20. 21. S. Paul professeth, that the whole matter of his preaching was nothing else but Repentance towards God, and Faith in our Lord Jesus Christ. It is manifest

in his Epistles, he preaches and presses every where, the necessity of *Mortification, Regeneration, new and sincere Obedience*, all which are evidently not contained under the head of *Faith*: and therefore it is evident he comprised all these under the head of *Repentance*.

III. Heb. 6. 1. We shall do much right to this place, and to that *Act. 20.* and make them more clear and intelligible, if instead of *Repentance*, we should put *conversion* (as it is in some of the best Latin translations) and read *conversion from dead works, and conversion to God*. You see, 'tis more perspicuous and more natural.

The eight and Twentieth Meeting.

A

I. **M**atth. 3. 9. Every tree that bringeth not forth good fruit, &c. It is not then the *leaves* of a fair profession, no nor the *blossoms* of good purposes and intentions, but the *fruit*, the fruit onely, that can save us from the fire: neither is it enough, not to bear ill fruit unless we bring forth good.

H. Matth. 7. 26. Our Saviour, after he had delivered

delivered his most divine precepts in his *Sermon on the mount* (which Sermon contains the substance of the gospel) closeth up all with saying, *He that heareth these sayings of mine, and doth them not* (and yet these were the hardest sayings that ever he said) *I will liken him to a foolish man, which built his house upon the sand*: that is, his hope of salvation upon a sandy and false ground.

III. Gal. 5. 24. *They that are Christs have Crucified the flesh, &c.* They then that have not done so, not crucified the *flesh* with the *affections and lusts*, let them be as sorrowful as they please, let them intend what they please as yet are *none of Christs*. And, Good Lord! What a multitude of *Christians* then are in the *World*, that do not belong to *Christ*!

B.

I. 1 **J**oh. 3. 3. *He that bath this hope purifieth himself, even as he is pure.* The meaning is not, with the same degree of purity, for that's impossible; but with the same kind, the same truth of purity. He that doth *not* purifie himself may, nay doth flatter himself, and without warrant presume upon Gods favour;

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but *this* hope he hath not.

III. *The fool hath said in his heart, &c.* i.e. Not so much perswadeth himself in secret, that there is no God; but rather expresseth so in his life, or in his affections: being a person of the same mould that are described, Tit. 1. 16. *They profess that they know God, but in works they deny him,* being abominable and disobedient, and to every good work void of judgment, ἀδόκιμοι, ignorant, imprudent, inconsiderate.

II. Luk. 7. 12. *When they have heard, then cometh the devil, &c.* The Devil will give people leave freely to hear the word of God preached, to study it, to dispute it, upon condition they resolve not to be the better for it in their lives: He will suffer it to swim in the brain, so that he may stop the passages to the heart: It troubles him not, to have the precious seed of the word entertained by a man, so that it may be kept in granaries, and not multiply in to a fruitful harvest.

C.

I. 1 **C**Or. 13. 4, &c. Here you may behold almost all the Vertues that can

can be named, enwrapped in one Virtue of *Charity*; and *Love*, according to the several acts thereof changed and transform'd into so many several graces. *It suffereth long*, and so 'tis Longanimity: *It is kind*, and so 'tis Courtelie: *It vaunteth not it self*, and so 'tis Modesty: *It is not puffed up*, and so 'tis Humility: *It is not easi'y provoked*, and so 'tis Lenity: *It thinketh no evil*, and so 'tis Simplicity: *It rejoyceth in the truth*, and so 'tis Verity: *It beareth all things*, and so 'tis Fortitude: *It believeth all things*, and so 'tis Faith: *It hopeth all things*, and so 'tis Confidence. *It endureth all things*, and so 'tis Patience: *It never faileth*, and so 'tis Perseverance.

II. Joh. 9. 34. — that they which see might be made blind. Not as if Christ did imprint or inflict blindness upon any man, but onely *occasionally*: i. e. those which walk in darkness, and love it; when the light comes upon them, and discovers their wandring, they hate it and turn their eyes from it, and become perversly and obstinately blind. In the same sense that S. Paul saith, Rom. 7. *Sin taking occasion by the Law becomes more sinful*: whilst sin is not oppos'd, it goes on in its course quietly, but when the Commandment comes, and discovers, and rebukes

bukes it, it becomes furious and much more raging and violent.

III. Luk. 14. 26. *He that hateth not father and mother, &c.* This speech doth not bind me to hate, persecute, and destroy all the kindred I have; no, but rather to love and honour them: yet if those persons, or if it be possible for ought else to be more dear and precious than they, stand in my way to hinder me from coming to *Christ*, I must trample them under my feet. And a man is no more bound to sell his goods i.e. to throw them away and renounce them, than to hate his *Parents*. Onely, neither of them may by any means offend us or weary us in our journey to *Christ*.

The nine and Twentieth Meeting.

A.

I. **J**AM. 2. 19. *The Devils believe and tremble.* They do assent unto the truth of all the mysteries of our salvation: But these things are to them occasion of *horror* that there should be such glorious things which do nothing concern them, and of *malice* to those who have an interest therein.

II. Heb.

II. Heb 11.1. *Our Faith is the substance of things hoped for.* Of things which concern us : we do not only acknowledge that the precepts of God are good, but also necessary to be performed by us ; and that the promises of God are not only desirable in themselves, but also that being such, they are destined to us, when we shall have performed such conditions, as may by the assistance of God be executed by us, even with ease and pleasure. Where these *perswasions* are, there will accompany them earnest and serious *endeavours*.

III. Psal. 60. 6. *What art thou that takest my word, &c.* And if that be so great a crime for a man only to talk of God, to make mention of his Name, when the heart is unclean and unreformed ; with how much greater reason may Christ say, what art thou that takest Me into thy mouth, & dardest come to the *Heavenly feast* with spotted and unclean affections.

B.

I. **R**om 8. 18. The Apostle, who had been traduc'd, reviv'd, buffeted, scourg'd, imprison'd, shipwrack'd, and ston'd, for his zeal to propagate the Gospel ; after he had once had a glimpse of that great *Recompence of reward* that is reserv'd for us in heaven,
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scruples not to pronounce, that he finds upon casting up the account (for he uses the Arithmetical term λογίζομαι) that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the Glory that is to be revealed in us.

II. 1 Kings 3. 5. Solomon had an opportunity of satisfying his desires, whether of Fame or any other thing that he could wish: *Ask what I shall give thee*, was the proffer made him by him that could give all things worth receiving; and yet his *Choice* approv'd by God himself, consisted in declining the most ambition'd things of this life, for those things that might the better qualifie him to serve and please God.

II. Heb. 12. 2. *He*, who by leaving heaven, did, to dwell on earth, quit more than any Inhabitant of the Earth can to gain heaven; and denyed more to become capable of being tempted, than he did when he was tempted with an offer of all the Kingdoms of the World and the glory of them; *This Saviour* of ours, is said to have, *for the joy that was set before him, endured the Cross and despised the shame*; as if Heaven had been a sufficient Recompence for even *his* renouncing honours and embracing torments.

C.

I. **R**om. 2. 7. That *immarcescible Crown*, (as S. Peter calls it) which the Gospel promises to them, *who by patient continuance in well doing seek for glory and honour*, will make a rich amends for a fading wreath here upon *Earth*, where *Reputation* is often times as undeservedly acquir'd as lost: whereas in *Heaven* the very having *cœlestial honours* argues a Title to them.

II. Math. 5. 12. Since 'tis our Saviour's reasoning, that his Disciples ought to *rejoyce* when their *Reputation* is pursued by *Calumny* as well as their lives by persecution, *because their Reward is great in heaven*; we may justly infer, That the grounded *Expectation* of so illustrious a Condition may bring us more content, even when tis not attended with a present applause, than this *applause* can give those who want that Comfortable Expectation.

III. 2 Chron. 25. 9. In all *deliberations* wherein any thing is propos'd to be quitted or declin'd, to obey or please God, we may fitly apply that brisk but rational Answer of the Prophet to the Jewish King: *The Lord is able to give thee far more than this.*

The Thirtieth Meeting.

A.

I. **A** Mos.6.5. *David* became no less *Skilful in musick*, than chose that were addicted to it onely to please themselves in it : tho we may reasonably suppose that so pious an Author of *Psalms and Instruments* aspired to an excellency in that delightful science, that he might apply and prefer it to the service of the *Temple*, and promote the celebration of *God's praises* with it.

II. Gen.27-3. Tho *Esau* did at length miss of his aim, yet while he was *hunting Venison* for the good Patriarch that desir'd it of him, besides the pleasure he was us'd to take in pursuing the Deer he chas'd, he took a great one in considering that now he hunted to please his *Father*, and in order to obtain of him an inestimable *Blessing*.

III. Gen.2.20. They say, *Adams* knowledg before the fall was such, that he was able at first sight of them to give each of the beasts a name expressive of its nature. But I could never find, that the *Hebrew* names of *Animals* mention'd in the beginning of *Genesis*, argued

a much clearer in sight into their natures than did the the names of the same or some other Animals in *Greek* or other languages.

B.

I. **P**sal. 145. 3. The *Scripture* saith of God that *his greatness is incomprehensible, and his wisdom is inscrutable, &c.* And the heathen Philosopher, who wrote that eloquent book *de Mundo* speaks of the power, and wisdom, and amiableness of God, in terms butle less lofty, tho necessarily inferior to so intinically sublime an Object. Which they that think they can, especially without *Revelation*, sufficiently understand, do very little understand themselves.

II. Rom. 1. 19. I readily confesse, being waranted by an *Apostle*, that the *γνώσις τοῦ Θεοῦ*, was not unknown to the heathen *Philosophers*; and that so much knowledge of God is attainable by the *light of Nature* duly imploy'd, as to encourage men to exercise themselves, more than most of them do in that *noblest* of studies.

III. Job. 1. 8. When God himself is pleas'd to give *Elogiums* to *Job, David, Daniel, &c.* whilst they were a live, and to others after they were dead, and were pass'd to an irreversible

verfible ſtate, we may learn with comfort, both that the performance of ſuch an *Obedience* as God will accept, is a thing really practicable by men: and that even great *ſins* and *miſdemaneors* are not (if ſeaſonably *repented* of) certain evidences, that a man ſhall never be happy in the future life. And it ſeems to be for ſuch an uſe of *Conſolation* to frail men (but not at all to encourage licentious ones) that the *lapses* of holy perſons are ſo frequently recorded in the Scriptures.

C.

I. **R**evel. 7. 9. *I ſaw in heaven a great multitude, not to be numbred, of all nations.* Ergo, Hence we may learn, that heaven is not reſerv'd onely for *Prophe's*, and *Apoſtles*, and *Martyrs*, and ſuch extraordinary perſons (whoſe ſanctity the Church admires) but that through Gods goodneſs *multitudes* of his more imperfect ſervants have acceſs thither. A great and well grounded *Conſolation* to a conſidering Chriſtian, who has due apprehenſions of the inexpressible happineſs or miſery of an immortal ſtate.

II. Joh. 3. 2. *As Ariſtote* teaches, that the Soul doth after a ſort become that which it ſpeculates: S. *John* aſſures us, that God, is a transforming

transforming Object, and that in heaven *we shall be like him, for (or because) we shall see him as he is.*

III. Psal. 18. 1. *I will love thee, O Lord my strength, &c.* He that discerns God's power and Goodness will be more disposed than others, to admire him, to love him, to trust, and so to resign up himself to be govern'd by him. Which frame of mind, both is it self a great part of the worship of God, and doth directly tend to the production and encrease of those Vertues, without the practise of which, the Scripture plainly tells us, that we can neither obey God, nor express our Love to him.

The one and Thirtieth Meeting.

A.

I. **H** Eb. 1. 14. Tho the Angels are wont to appear in a dazling splendor, yet are they all of them *ministring Spirits*, employ'd for the good of the design'd heirs of *Salvation*. And they do not onely refuse mens *adoration*, but stile themselves, *fellow servants* to the Lord's disciples.

II. 2 Pet. 2. 4. Jude. 6. The *Apostate Angels* are so far from being able to confer that happiness, which their worshippers expect from them, that themselves are wretched Creatures, reserv'd in chains of darkness to the Judgment of the great day. At which they shall be doom'd to suffer everlasting torments, in the company of those wicked men that they shall have prevail'd on.

III. Jam. 3. 6. 1 Pet. 3. 7. *Theology* teacheth us expressly from divine Revelation, that the present Course of Nature shall not last always; but that one day *this World* (or at least this *Vortex* of ours) shall either be abolished by *Annihilation* or, (which seems far more probable) be innovated, and as it were *transfigur'd*; and that by the intervention of that fire, which shall dissolve and destroy the present frame of Nature. So that, either way the present state of things, as well natural as political, shall have an end.

B.

I. **A** & 24. 15. As the *Scripture* teacheth us, how the body of man had its first beginning; so it likewise assures us, what shall become of the *body after death*; tho bare natural Reason will scarce be pretended to reach

reach to so abstruse and difficult an Article as that of a *Resurrection*: which, when propos'd by *S. Paul*, produc'd among the *Athenian* Philosophers nothing else but wonder or laughter. *Act*, 17. 20, 32.

II. *Joh*. 5. 39. Few make it their business to search the *Scriptures* for those things (such as are unheeded *Prophecies*, overlook'd *mysteries* and strange *harmonies*) which being clearly and judiciously propos'd may make that Book appear more worthy of the high extraction it challenges, and consequently of the Veneration of considering men.

III. *Isai*. 5. 4. *What could I have done*, &c. In the production of the material World, and the setting the frame of *Nature*, God employ'd not onely laws and commands, but revelations, miracles, promises, threats, exhortations, mercies, judgments, and divers other methods and means.

C.

I. *JOb*. 38. 5, 6. 'Tis the probable Opinion of Divines, that the *Angels* were created before the material World, as being meant by those *Sons of God* and *morning stars*, that with glad *Songs* and acclamations celebrat-

ed the foundations of the earth.

II. Psal. 57. 23. How pleasing mens hearty praises are to God, may appear by that Royal Prophet, whom God was pleas'd to declare a man *after his own heart*; for he introduceth God pronouncing, *Who so offereth praise glorifieth me*: Where the Word our Interpreters render *offereth*, in the Hebrew signifies *to sacrifice*. With which agrees, that elsewhere those that pay God their Praises, are said to sacrifice to him *the calves of their lips*. Hos. 14. 2.

III. Psalms. That excellent person to whom God vouchsafed so particular a testimony, was so assiduous in this exercise, that the Book which we, following the Greek, call *Psalms*, is in the Original, from the things it most abounds with, called *Sepher Tehillim*. i. e. The Book of Praises.

The two and Thirtieth Meeting.

A.

I. **L** Evit. 25. 23. *The land is mine, and ye are sojourners.* God granted the use of it to them; yet kept still the right and full disposal of it to himself: For the Lord calls them for all this grant, but *sojourners and strangers*: who held what they possess, under God, and continued in it no longer than he gave them leave, from whom he might take it away, and bestow it on whom he pleased.

II. Psal. 19. 12. *Clenſe me from my ſecret ſins*: Sins which fly our sight, that steal from us in crouds or borrowed shapes, so sily as man (who is the most absurd flatterer of himself) cannot discern them: as pride in decency, malice in zeal, hypocrisie in devotion, boasting in charity, covetousness and extortion under the name of providing for our families.

III. 1 King. 15. 5. *David is said to have done all things well, excepting the matter of Uriah*: not that he could indeed clear himself from all guilts: for whosoever marks

his story, will find many foul actions, besides this of *Uriah*: but because he did not *lye dead* in any sin but this, for he had a child before ever he thought he had committed adultery.

B.

I. **J**ER. 12. 1. *why do the wicked prosper.* The Objection supposes a false thing. We think them in a better condition then they are. For wicked men did *never prosper* in the world, unless you will call it happiness for a man to assure God's wrath upon himself, and to have a liberty to improve his sins, and encrease his damnation.

II. Psal. 37. 1. *Envy thou not the ungodly.* Alas, we should rather pity & pray for them, as much as if we saw them, like the *Lunaticks* in the Gospel, cutting and tearing their own flesh. For the Lord is not slack, he is but whetting his sword, putting on his armour and then will go out with a shout, and all the world shall say, *Verily there is a Reward for the Righteous.*

III. Psal. 42. 14. *Why art thou so troubled, O my soul!* For the Devil himself cannot so much as stir without Gods leave, as appears by many examples in *Job* and the Gospel too;

too; and *wicked men* are but Gods instruments, his hammer and his hatchet, as the Prophet *Isaiah* calls them, with which he cuts, carves, polishes and works our hearts, which otherwise would remain rude stone for ever.

C.

I. **M**atth. 16. 24. *Whoſoever will come after me, &c.* Our Lord and Maſter requires this principle of his diſciples, as a neceſſary qualification; To reſolve before hand thus much, never to regard any thing hereafter beſides him, to ſtrip our ſelves of all earthly conſiderations whatſoever; to go continually with our lives and fortunes in our hands, ready in an inſtant to lay them down, as ſoon as ever the Lord hath need of them. So as none muſt dare to follow *Chriſt* without his *Croſs*.

II. Phil. 4. 11. *I have learned in what ſtate ſoever I am, &c.* This is the knowledge which makes us Wiſe, Rich, Free, Happy, every thing; ſupplies all our wants, and ſets us above danger; to have learnt quietly to ſubmit our ſelves to God in all the variety of diſpenſations, to be content (*αὐτάρκετος*) to be ſelf ſufficient, to have provision within our ſelves againſt all accidents.

III. Phil. 4. 1. S. Paul calls these *Philippians* whom he had instructed with good success *his joy and his Crown*. For if there be degrees of bliss hereafter, as our Saviour, as well as the Prophets seems to imply, we may not doubt, but, he who converts a Soul to God as he is said to encrease the joys of heaven by doing it, so certainly he shall partake more of them and shine *as a star* for ever and ever, *Dan. 12. 3.*

The three and Thirtieth Meeting.

A.

1. I **C**Or. 9. The *Apostle* proves the Ministers right by all kind of Arguments, from *Custom*, Reason, and *Scripture*, and lest you should pretend the abrogation of this Law by Christ, he addes *v. 14.* that the Lord hath ordained, *That they who preached the Gospel should live of the Gospel.* He hath ordained, enacted it, and made it a Law for ever: it is not left to your choice and discretion. And our *Saviour*, when he sends out his Apostles, call their maintenance *their hire*, *Mat. 10.* As if there did pass a tacite contract and bargain between

between the preacher and the Audience, that as he feeds their *Souls*, they should feed his *Body*.

II. Rom. 13. 8. *Owe no man any thing, but to love one another.* A most excellent speech, and means thus : as if he said, you may pay your bills at a shop, and be out of the Trades-mans debt ; you may lay down your money, and take up your bonds ; you may really satisfy all other engagements, but this debt of *Charity* never : This you must alwayes be paying, yet never think it satisfied.

III. Gal. 3. 3. *Have ye begun in the Spirit and are ye now made perfect in the flesh ? Will ye fall back from the Spirit, which teacheth true and solid piety, to a carnal and outward worship of God, to the Ceremonies of the Law ? Christ and Moses, the Gospel and the Law cannot consist together ; To seek for justification by the Law is quite to shut out Christ, whose peculiar office it is to justify and save us.*

B.

I. **I** Sai. 14. 12. *How art thou fallen from heaven, O Lucifer ! How art thou fallen from being a Minister of light to be a Prince of darkness, from being so filled with the*
Grace

Grace of the Divinity, to be a foul receptacle of malice? from waiting on God in all his Majesty, to be thrust down into the foulest pit, there to be his Executioner? And how art thou safe *O man*, whosoever thou be that hatest thy brother, from heaven (for in earth there is no other heaven than what love makes) to hell itself, malice and envy?

II. Gal. 4. 12. *Brethren I beseech you.* As we are Brethren by nature, so are we by Grace and our celestial calling. & *major fraternitas, Christi quam sanguinis*: The brotherhood we have by Christ is a greater and nearer tie than that we have by blood or nature. *Justin Martyr* and *Optatus* have been so far charitable as to call Judaizing Christians and Donatists by the name of *brethren*.

III. Gal. 6. 1. He who considereth, that himself also may be tempted, will use the Spirit of meekness towards an erring brother. Great is the difficulty of finding out truth in all things, and of avoiding error. This consideration made *S. Austin* so compassionate and mild even towards the worst of Hereticks the *Manichees*, and to think that none could be enrag'd against them, but those who thought it an easy matter to screen the mind against carnal pleasures; and who knew not how hard a thing it is for the eye of the inward man through

Communicating, &c.

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through so many mists of Objections to look upon the Sun.

C.

I. **M**ark 9.50. *Have salt in your selves.*
No text of Scripture in its exposition can retain the sense and meaning of the blessed Spirit which doth not edifie in charity. For *that* doctrine cannot be of any use in the Church, which exasperates one man against another. And this moderation, this discretion is that *salt* which Christ requires to be in us, that wise seasoning of our words, that purging of our affections, among which ambition and envy are the most violent: *Have this salt in your selves, and then you shall have peace one with another.*

11. 2. Thes. 3.14. *If any man obey not our word, i.e. be refractory to the Gospel of Christ; have no company with that man, that he may be ashamed: that seeing others avoid him, he may be forced to have recourse unto himself, to hold colloquy with his own Soul, to find out that plague of his heart, which makes him like that leper under the Law, which no man must come near. Have no company with him: i.e. by thy company give him no encouragement in his sin. And yet for all this,*
Have

Have company with him : for Count him not as an enemy, but admonish him as a brother : Which we cannot do, if we avoid his company.

III. 1 Cor. 5. 10. In this sense also we must take that of the Apostle where he forbids to eat with publick and notorious offenders. For the Apostles mind was not that such men were to be given over for gone, or that we should acquaint our selves onely with the good, and not with the bad. For our Saviour Christ familiarly conversed, eat and drank with publicans and sinners, and gives the reason of it : Because he came to call, not the righteous, but sinners to repentance. : and we cannot think that S. Paul is contrary to Christ.

The four and Thirtieth Meeting.

A.

I. **M** Atth. 7. 7. Search and ye shall find : not every particular Truth ; for experience teaches us that cannot be the interpretation : but whether you find or no the Truth which you search for, you shall find the reward of Searching, which is happiness,

II. 1 Cor.

II. 1 Cor. 2. 14. *The natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit, &c.* I conceive it ought to be rendred, *the sensual man*: for such is *ψυχικός* in the Greek, & *animalis* in the Latin; *ψυχή* many times signifying the lower, and sensitive part of the soul, in distinction to *νους* which is the upper or rational. So, the meaning is: That whilst a mans reason is seduced by his appetites and passions, it is an unfit judge of spiritual matters; neither can be Umpire for a peace, having joyn'd it self to the party of those things which are in perpetual war far against the Spirit.

III. 2. Cor. 10. 5. *Casting down reasonings, &c.* S. Paul relates in vindication of his own just greatness against the calumnies of some that despised his person (especially as weak and rude of speech) how he had confuted those persons that opposed themselves by *reasonings* against the doctrine of Christ. And whereas their understandings before were enslaved and captivated to the desires of the sensual soul, which hindered them from the obedience of Christ, he freed them from their cruel bondage, by casting down all their *strong holds*, & brought them into another captivity by right of conquest, but such a one, where the yokes are light and the burdens easie, i.e. by *true reason* he overcame, and captivated their false ones.

B.

I. I Cor. 5. 11. *With such a one no not to eat.* By eating with him is understood familiar society in dyet or lodgin. For in case I come to an ordinary or Inn to eat; and see at the Table an excommunicate person sitting, whom I have no power to exclude, what can hinder me from dining with him?

II. Cor. 11. 28. *Let a man examine himself.* And yet perfect Faith or Repentance is not required; as some by too much urging perfection, which is no where found, shut out almost all for ever from the Communion. God accepts of a weak Faith, if it be sincere.

III. I Cor. 13. 7. *Charity beareth all things, believeth all things.* He requireth here simplicity and humanity in judging, these being the perpetual companions of Charity; whereby a Christian thinks it better to be deceived through his benignity and facility, than by a sinister suspicion to grieve his brother.

C.

I. 1 **C**Or. 12.8. S. Paul reckons *Wisdom and knowledge* in the first rank of *the gifts of God*, and if he any where seem to reflect severely upon wisdom or humane learning, he onely censures the *Abuse*, never intending to blame the *thing* it self.

II. 1 Cor. 11. 22. *What, have you not houses to eat and drink in; or despise ye the Church of God?* Where that by *Church* is not meant the *Assembly* meeting, but the place in which they used to assemble, is evident, partly from what went before; for *their coming together in the Church* is expounded by *their coming together into one place*; partly from the opposition which he makes between the *Church* and their own private *houses*; in this verse. If they must have such irregular banquets, they had houses of their own much fitter for it, and for their ordinary repast, than that place set a part for the common exercises of Religion.

III. 1 Cor. 16. 1, 2. The Apostle giving directions to the Church of *Corinth* (as he had done in the like case to other Churches concerning their contributions to the poor suffering brethren, he bids them *lay aside upon the first day of the week*: which seems plainly

y to respect their Religious Assemblies upon that day; for then it was that every one according to his ability deposited something for the relief of the poor, and the uses of the Church.

The five and Thirtieth Meeting.

A.

I. **R**EV. I. 18. *On the Lords day.* This was the more proper and prevalent name of the first day week, that day whereon our Lord made his triumphant return from the dead. This *Justin Martyr* assures us (*Apol. 2.*) was the true Original of the Title, upon Sundays (sayes he) *we all assemble and meet together, &c.* He and *Tertullian* call it *Sunday*; and it seldome passes under any other name in the imperial Edicts of the first Christian Emperours. The Primitive Christians looked upon this day as a time to be celebrated with great expression of joy, and accordingly restrained whatever might savour of sorrow and sadness: A day of rest, that men might have nothing to do but to worship God, and be better instructed in the Christian Faith.

II. Gal.

II. Gal. 4. 15. S. Paul bears record to the *Galatians*, that he was accounted so dear to them, that if *the plucking out their eyes* would have done him any good, they were ready to have done it for his sake. And the ancient Christians carried themselves toward their Bishops and Ministers, with all that kindness and veneration which they were capable to express towards them. S. Clement testifieth of the *Corinthians*, that they walked in the *Laws of God*, being subject to them that had the rule over them, yielding due honour to their spiritual guides.

III. Col. 3. 16. In the ancient times, even the most rude and illiterate persons, instead of profane wanton songs, which vitiate and corrupt the minds of men (*τὰς σατανικὰς ᾠδὰς* Chrysostome calls them) *Songs of the devils composition*, used nothing but *spiritual and divine Hymns*, so that (as Hierome relates of the place where he lived) you could not go into the field, but you might hear the Plow-man at his *Hallelujahs*, the Mower at his hymns, and the Vinodresser singing *Dauids Psalms*.

B.

I. I C Or. 11. *The Lords supper*. The Eucharist which S. Paul speaks of

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in the Church of *Corinth* was solemnized in the morning, the Apostle calling it a supper (as *Chrysostom* thinks) not because 'twas in the evening, but the more effectually to put them in mind of the time when our Lord did institute those holy mysteries.

I. 1 Tim. 5. 10. *S. Paul* expressly requires it as a qualification in a Widow, that was to be taken in as a Deaconess into the Church, that she be one that has us'd to lodge strangers, and to wash the Saints feet. *Tertullian* assures us, 'twas usually done by Christians in his time, to go into the prisons to kiss and embrace the Martyrs chains, to harbour and provide for indigent brethren, and to bring water to wash the Saints feet. No office so low, which they were not content to stoop to.

II. Matth. 16. 24. *Let him deny himself.* *Nazianzen* tells us (*Orat. 1.*) that of those excellencies and endowments which God had given him, *health, wealth, esteem, and eloquence*, he reaped this onely benefit, that he had something which he could contemn, and by which he could shew that he infinitely valued Christ before them.

I. 2 **T**Hes. 2. 2, 3: This did mightily contribute to the weaning of the first Christians from the World, and did strongly animate them to a quick and speedy diligence about the affairs of the other life; namely, an opinion they generally had of the *day of Judgement being near at hand*: An opinion started early, as appears by that Caution which St. Paul gives the *Thessalonians* about it.

II. 1 Pet. 3. 3. The Apostles require of women, *not the outward adorning of gold and fine apparel, but shamsfac'tness and sobriety, the hidden ornament of the heart*, That tho they were rich, yet they were to consult the honour and modesty of their profession, and might not go to the utmost bounds of what was lawful; some things being lawful which were not expedient; especially when by their wanton and lascivious dress they might be a means to kindle in the breasts of others the flames of an unchast and unlawful passion, and so prove the occasion of their ruin.

III. Rom. 13. ult. The Law of Christ commands us to fast often, to keep under the body, and to *make no provision for the flesh*. If na-

ure regularly governed be content with little, Religion will teach us to be content with less.

The six and Thirtieth Meetings

I. Am. 2. 21. *Abraham* is said to have been justified by Faith, when he offered his Son *Isaac* upon the Altar: tho he did not actually sacrifice him: because he endeavoured to do so, God graciously accepting the will for the deed, accepted also of the blood of a Lamb instead of *Isaac's*.

II. 1 Tim. 3. 16. The Gospel is fill'd, *The mystery of Godliness*: and *S. Paul* else where calls what it teaches, *The truth which is according to godliness*, Tit. 1. 2. i. e. a doctrine fram'd and fitted to promote the interest of Piety and Virtue in the World. This Character belongs to the more retired truths discovered by speculation, as well as to those more obvious ones, that are familiarly taught in Catechisms.

III. Ex. 15. 25. The inward gratulations of Conscience, for having done our duties, is able to gild the bitterest pills, and like the Wood

wood that grew by the Waters of *Marab*, to correct and *sweeten* that liquor, which before was the most distasteful.

B.

I. **M** Ath. 5. 29. Though to deny some lusts be, in our Saviours esteem, no less uneasy than for a man to *pluck out his right eye, or cut off his right hand*; yet even Maids have with satisfaction chosen, not only to deny themselves the greatest pleasures of the sense, but to sacrifice the seat of them, the body itself, to preserve the satisfaction of being chaste

II. 1 Pet. 1. 12. The Gospel mysteries are of so noble and excellent a nature, *The Angels themselves desire to look into them*. And it was the earnest desire of a great King and no less a Prophet, that his eyes might behold the wondrous things of God's Law, Psal. 119, 18.

III. Matth. 11. 15. 'Tis not onely those Truths that make Articles of the Creed; but divers other doctrines of the Gospel that Christ himself judged worthy to be concluded with this epiphonema: *He that hath ears to hear, let him hear*. On which the excellent *Grotius* makes this just paraphrase: *De-*

relictus nobis à Deo potissimum datus est, ut enim intendamus documentis ad pietatem tendentibus.

C.

I. **H** Eb. 5.9. The Creed proposes the *cre-
denda*, not the *agenda* of Religion :
whereas the Scriptures were designed, not on-
ly to teach us what *Truths* we are to believe,
but by what *rules* we are to live, the *obedience*
to the Laws of Christianity being as necessa-
ry to *Salvation*, as the belief of its mysteries.

II. Col. 3. 16. Whether or no those words
of our Saviour to the Jews, *ἐμνηστεύσατε τὰς
ῥήματα*, be to be rendred in the im-
perative, or indicative mood ; S. Paul would
have the *word of Christ* to dwell richly in us,
thereby teaching us, that besides the things
which are absolutely necessary there are sever-
al Truths that are highly usetul, to make us
more clearly understand, and more rationally
and firmly believe, and more steadily pra-
ctise the points that are necessary.

III. 1 Tim. 2. 4. Through the great good-
ness of God, *who is willing to have all men saved,*
and come to the knowledge of the truth, necessa-
ry to salvation, there are much fewer Articles
absolutely necessary to be by all men distinctly
believed, then may be met with in divers long

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Confessions of Faith: some of which have,
I fear, less promoted Knowledge than im-
paired Charity.

The seven and Thirtieth Meeting.

A.

I. I **C**OR. 13. 9. *Now we know in part,*
&c. Doubtless, tho Heaven a-
bound with inexpressible Joys,
yet it will be none of the least, that shall make
up the Happiness even of that place, that the
knowledg of divine things, that was here so
zealously pursued, shall there be compleatly
attain'd

II. Matth. 5. 8. The contentment afforded by
the assiduous discovery of God and divine my-
steries, has so much of affinity with the pleas-
ures that shall make up mens *Blessedness* in
heaven it self, that they seem rather to differ
in degree than in kind. For our Saviour, to
express the coelestial joys, reserved for those
who for their sake denied themselves sensual
pleasures, makes them to consist in the Vision
of God: *Blessed are the pure in heart, for they
shall see God.*

III. Matth. 23. No less than eight woes
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are denounced against the *Scribes and Pharisees* by our Saviour himself (who is not very forward to destroy, he came upon a far other business) and all those woes for their folly and blindness. In the denouncing of every woe but one, he *styles* them *hypocrites*. And an hypocrite is the veriest fool in the world, for he thinks to cozin and put a cheat upon God, whom yet himself confesses to be omniscient, knowing all things. In that single woe, he calls them *blind guides*, elsewhere *fools and blind*. This was our Saviours judgment of them, and you may rest upon it.

B.

I. **M** Atth. 12. 36. Our blessed Saviour told us, that we must *account for every idle word*: not meaning, that every word which is not design'd to edification, or is less prudent, shall be reckoned for a sin; but that the time, which we spend in our idle talking & unprofitable discourings, that time which might and ought to have been employ'd to spiritual & useful purposes, that is to be accounted for.

II. Ezek. 16. 49. *Idleness* is called *the sin of Sodom and her daughters*, and indeed is the burial of a living man; an idle person being so useless to any purposes of God & man, that he

is like one that is dead, unconcerned in the changes and necessities of the world : and he only lives to spend his time, and eat the fruits of the earth.

III. Jer. 48. 10. Do not *the work of God negligently* and idly : Let not thy heart be upon the World, when thy hand is lift up in prayer and be sure to prefer an action of religion in its place and proper season before all worldly pleasure. In honouring God and doing his work put forth all thy strength, for of that time onely thou maist be most confident that it is gained, which is prudently and zealously spent in God's service.

C.

I. **E** Ph. 5. 16. Be sure by a timely diligence to *redeem the time*, i.e. to be pious and religious in such instances in which formerly you have sinned; and to bestow your time especially upon such graces, the contrary whereof you have formerly practiced ; and then by all arts to watch against your present and future dangers, from day to day securing your standing. This is properly *to redeem your time*, i.e. to buy your security of it at the rate of any labour and honest arts.

II. 1 Cor. 7. 5. Let him that is *most busied* set

part some solemn time every year, in which, for the time quitting his worldly businels, he may attend wholly to fasting and praying. and the dressing of his soul by confessions, meditations, and attendances upon God; that he may make up his accounts and renew his vows.

III. 1 Cor. 10. 21. That we should intend and design Gods glory in every action we do, whether it be natural or chosen, is expressed by S. Paul: *Whether ye eat or drink do all to the glory of God.* Which rule when we observe, every action of nature becomes religious, and every meal is an act of worship, and shall have its reward in its proportion, as well as an act of prayer.

The eight and Thirtieth Meeting.

A.

I. **L**uk. 1. 18. *Whereby shall I know this?* Zacharias question'd with the Angel about his message, and was made speechless for his incredulity; but the blessed Virgin question'd too and was blameless: for she did it to enquire after the manner

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ner of the thing, but he did not believe the thing it self: he doubted of Gods power, or the truth of the messenger, but she only of her own incapacity.

II. Matth. 10. 42. The poor Farmer that gave a *dish of cold water* to Artaxerxes was rewarded with a golden goblet; and he that gives the same to a *Disciple in the name of a disciple* shall have a Crown.

III. Psal. 115. 1. Let every action of concernment be begun with prayer, and Sanctifie your purpose, and in the prosecution of it renew and rekindle your purpose by short ejaculations, as this: *Not unto us, O Lord, &c.* For then be sure, as the glory is his, so the reward shall be thine.

B.

I. 1 Sam. 1. 8. What *Helkanah* said to the mother of *Samuel*, *Am I not better to thee than ten sons?* is most certainly verified concerning God, that he who is to be our judge is better than ten thousand witnesses. And indeed that man hath a strange covetousness, or folly, that is not contented with this reward, that *he hath pleased God.*

II. Matth. 6. 2. *When thou doest alms, &c.*
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Good actions degenerate without purity of intention. Thus *alms* are for charity, *fasting* for temperance, *prayer* for Religion, *humiliation* is for humility, *austerity* or *sufferance* is in order to the Virtue of patience. And when these actions fail of their several ends, or are not directed to their own purposes, *alms* are mispent, *fasting* is an impertinent trouble, *prayer* is but lip-labour, *humiliation* is but hypocrisy, *sufferance* is but vexation.

III. Matth. 6. 22. When there is both truth in election and Charity in the intention, when we go to God in wayes of his own chusing or approving, then *our eye is single*, and our hands are clean, and our hearts are pure.

C.

I. Jer. 23. 24. That God is present in all places, that he sees every action, hears all discourses, and understands every thought, we are taught not onely by right reason, and the consent of all the wise men in the world, but also by God himself in holy Scripture, *Can any hide himself in secret places that I shall not see him, saith the Lord, &c. All things are naked and open to his eyes, Heb. 4. 13.*

II. Matth. 6. 9. Which art in heaven. God

is more specially present in some places by the several and more special manifestations of himself. Thus his seat is in heaven, because there he sits encircled with all the outward demonstrations of his glory, which he is pleas'd to shew to all the inhabitants of those his inward and secret Courts.

III. Matth. 18. 20. *Where two or three are gathered together, &c.* God is by Grace and benediction specially present in the assemblies of his servants. God will go out of his way to meet his Saints, when themselves are forced out of their way of order by a sad necessity: but else, Gods usual way is to be present in those places where his servants are appointed ordinarily to meet and by publick authority. But his presence there signifies nothing but a readiness to hear their prayers, to bless their persons, to accept their offices, and to like even this circumstance of orderly and publick Meeting.

The nine and Thirtieth Meeting.

A.

I. 1 **C**OR. 3. 16. *The spirit of God dwelleth in you. God is especially present in the hearts of his people by his holy Spirit. For God reigns in the hearts of his servants; there is his Kingdome: The power of grace hath subdued all his enemies; there is his power: They serve him day and night, and give him thanks and praise: That is his glory.*

II. Psal. 139. 6. *Whither shall I flee from thy presence.* This thought by being frequent will make an habitual dread and reverence toward God, and fear in all thy actions. For it is a great necessity and engagement to do unblamably, when we act before the judge, who is infallible in his sentence, and intolerable in his wrath and indignation.

III. Psalmist *Seven times a day do I praise thee, and in the night, &c.* In your retirement make frequent colloquies or short discoursings between God and thy own soul. so did David. And this is called a *building to God a chappel in our hearts.* Thus in the midst of
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of your works you retire into your Chappel, and converse with God by frequent address and returns.

B.

I. **1** **C**Or. 9. 25. The life of a Christian is a perpetual exercise, a wrestling and warfare; to which sensual pleasure disables him, by yielding to that enemy with whom he must strive, if ever he will be crowned. And this argument the Apostle intimated *He that striveth for masteries is temperate in all things, &c.*

II. Revel. 2. 17. In the same degree in which we relish and are in love with spiritual delights, *the bidden Manna*, with the sweetnesses of devotion, with the joys of thanksgiving, with rejoycings in the Lord, with the comforts of hope, with the deliciousness of Charity and alms deeds, with the sweetness of a good conscience, with the peace of meekness, and the felicities of a contented spirit; in the same degree we dislike and loath the husks, of swinish lusts, and the parings of the apples of *Sodom*, and the taste of sinful pleasures.

III. **1** Cor. 10. 25. *Whatsoever is set before you eat.* If it be provided for you, you may eat it, be it never so delicate, and be it plain

plain and common, so it be wholesome and fit for you, it must not be refused upon curiosity: for every degree of that is a degree of intemperance.

C.

I. **L**uk. 21. 34. *Take heed to yourselves lest at any time your hearts be overcharged, &c.* Christ forbids both the actual and the habitual intemperance; not onely the effect of it, but the affection to it: for in both there is sin. It is a sin inordinately to love or use the drink, tho the surfeiting or violence do not follow.

II. 1 Thes. 5. 8. *Let us who are of the day be sober.* The Faith of the Mahometans forbids them to drink wine, and they abstain religiously as the Sons of Reebab: And the Faith of Christ forbids drunkenness to us, and therefore is infinitely more powerful to suppress this vice, when we remember that we are Christians, and to abstain from drunkenness & gluttony is part of the Faith and discipline of Jesus, and that with these vices neither our love to God, nor our hopes of heaven can consist.

III. 1 Cor. 6. 12. *All things are lawful for me, but I will not be brought under the power of any*

any. In all cases be careful that you be not brought under *power* of such things which otherwise are lawful enough in the use. To be perpetually *longing*, and impatiently desirous of any thing, so that a man cannot abstain from it, is to loose a mans liberty, and to become a servant of meat and drink, or *smoke*.

The Fortieth Meeting.

A.

I. 1 **T** *Hef. 4. 4. — to possess his vessel in sanctification and honour.*

Chastity is that grace which forbids and restrains all irregular desires in the matter of carnal pleasures, keeping the body and soul pure in that state in which it is placed by God, whether of the single or of the married life.

II. Revel. 14. 4. Single life is more excellent then the married, in that degree in which it hath greater religion, and a greater mortification; a less satisfaction of natural desires, and a greater fulness of the spiritual: and just so is to expect that little Coronet or special reward which God hath prepared (extraordinary and besides the great Crown of all Faith-

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ful souls) for those *Who have not defiled themselves with women, but follow the Virgin Lamb for ever.*

III. Hof. 2. 6. The Appetites of uncleanness are full of cares and trouble, and its fruition is sorrow and repentance. *The way of the adulterer is hedged with thorns: full of tears and jealousies, burning desires and impatient waitings, tediousness of delay, and sufferance of affronts and amazements of discovery.*

B.

I. **M** Atth. 5, *Blessed are the pure in heart.* A pure mind in a chaste body is the mother of Wisdome and Sober counsel, Love of God and self-denial, peace and confidence, holy prayer and spiritual comfort and a pleasure of spirit infinitely greater than the scottish and beastly pleasures of unchastity, *For to overcome pleasure is the greatest pleasure, and no victory is greater then that which is gotten over our lusts and filthy inclinations.* Cyprian.

II. Gen. 26. 11. *Abimelech* to the men of Gerar made it death to meddle with the wife of Isaac: and *Judah* condemned *Thamar* to be burnt for her adulterous conception: and God, besides the law made to put the adulterous person to death, did constitute a settled and

and constant miracle to discover the adultery of a suspected woman, that her bowels should burst with drinking the waters of jealousy.

Num. 5. 14.

III. *Matth. 5.* If a man lets his eye loose, and enjoys the lust of that, he is an adulterer. *Look not upon a woman to lust after her.* And supposing all the other members restrained, yet if the eye be permitted to lust, the man can no otherwise be called chaste, than he can be called severe and mortified, that sits all day long seeing plays and revellings; and out of greediness to fill his eye neglects his belly.

C.

I. 1 **P***Et. 1. 22. Seeing ye have purified your souls—see that ye love one another,* &c. A Virgin that consecrates her body to God, and pollutes her spirit with rage, or impatience; or inordinate anger, gives him what he most hates, a most foul and defiled soul.

II. 1 *Cor. 7. 5.* It is S. Pauls rule, that by consent for a time they should abstain, that they give themselves to fasting and prayer. And tho when Christians did receive the holy communion every day, it is certain they did not

abstain, but had children: yet when the Communion was more seldome, they did with Religion abstain from the marriage bed during the time of their solemn preparatory devotions, as aniently they did from eating and drinking til the solemnity of the day was past.

III. Eph. 5. 32. Marriage is by Christ hal-
lowed into a mystery to signifie the Sacramen-
tal and *mystical union of Christ and his Church*.
He therefore that breaks this knot, which the
Church and their mutual Faith has tyed, and
Christ hath knit up into a mystery, dishonours
a great rite of Christianity, of high spiritual
and excellent signification.

The one and Fortieth Meeting.

A.

I. **M**atth. 11. 29. *Humility* is the
great ornament and jewel of
Christian Religion, having
been first put in a discipline and made part of
a religion by our Lord *Jesus Christ*, who pro-
pounded himself imitable by his Disciples so
signally in nothing as in the twin sisters o
Meekness and humility: *Learn of me for I am*
Meek and humble, &c. II. Dan.

II. Dan. 4. 27. Entertain no fancies of vanity and private whispers of this Devil of pride : such as was that of Nebuchadnezzar, *Is not this great Babylon which I have built for the honour of my name?* Some phantastick spirits will walk alone, and dream waking of greatnesses, of Palaces, of excellent Orations, loud applauses : nothing but the fumes of pride.

III. Jam. 4. 6. *God resisteth the proud*, professing open defiance and hostility against such persons ; but *giveth grace to the humble*, Grace and pardon, content in all conditions, tranquility of spirit, patience in afflictions ; love abroad, peace at home ; and freedom from contention, and the sin of censuring others, and the trouble of being censured themselves.

B.

I. **M**atth. 7. 3. The humble man will not judge his brother for *the mote in his eye*, being more troubled at *the beam in his own eye* ; and is patient and glad to be reprov- ed, because himself hath cast the first stone at himself and therefore wonders not that others are of his mind.

II. Joh. 13. 15. *I have given you an exam-*

ple. His whole life was a great continued example of humility, a vast descent from the glorious bosome of his Father to the swomb of a poor Maiden; to the form of a servant, to the miseries of a sinner, to a life of labour, to a state of poverty, to a death of malefactors, to the grave of death, and to the intolerable calamities which we deserved: and it were a good design, and yet but reasonable, that we should be as humble in the midst of our greatest imperfections and basest sins; as Christ was in the midst of his fulness of the spirit, great wisdom, perfect life, and most admirable Virtues.

III. Phil. 4. 8. Be a curious observer of all those things which are of *good report*, and are parts of publick *honesty*, publick *fame*, and the sentence of prudent and publick persons is the measure of good and evil in things indifferent.

C.

I. **J**am. 3. 2. The due managery of this unruly and slippery member, the tongue, may rightly be esteemed one of the greatest mysteries of Wisdom and Virtue: *If any man offend not in word, the same is a perfect man, &c.* The story of Pambo

a Primitive Christian is here to be remembered.

II. Matth. 12. 37. Tho in our depraved estimate the eloquence of language is more regarded then the innocence; tho we think our words vanish with the breath that utters them, yet they become records in Gods Court, are laid up in his Archives as witnesses either for or against us: for he who is truth it self hath told us, that *by thy Words shalt thou be justified, and by thy Words thou shalt be condemned.*

III. Matth. 18. 7. As in all civil insurrections the Ringleader is lookt on with a particular severity; so doubtless in private quarrels the first provoker has by his seniority a double portion of the guilt, and may consequently expect of the punishment according to the doctrine of our Saviour, *Woe be to that man by whom the offence cometh.*

The two and Fortieth Meeting.

A

I. **J**oh.8.44. False accusation is of all other sins the most diabolical, being a conjunction of two of Satans most essential properties, malice and lying. Tis his peculiar title, *The accuser of the brethren*, and when we transcribe his copy, we also assume his nature, entitle our selves to a descent from him, *Ye are of your Father the Devil.*

II. Revel.2. We find the *Love of a lye* ranked in an equal form with the *maker*. And surely he must be presumed to love it that can descend to be the broker to it, help it to pass currant in the World

III. 2 Tim.2.25. *With meekness instruct the contrary minded,* Each Sect or Opinion represents its *Antagonist* as odious as it can, and whilst they contend for speculative truth, they by mutual calumnies forfeit the practice: a sad thing, that those who all pretend to the same Christianity, should onely be unanimous in the violating that truth and charity it prescribes.

E.

I. ^{Atth. 22.20.} **M**ore secure Satan's title to us, than the vice of *Calumny*, it bearing his proper impress and figure: and we may fear Christ will one day make the same Judgment of persons, as he did of *Coin*, and award them to him *whose Image and Superscription they bear.*

II. 1 Cor. 13. 5. *Charity*, whose property it is, *not to seek her own*, will prompt me to prefer a greater concern of my neighbours before a slight one of my own; but in equal circumstances, I am sure at liberty to be kind first to my self. If I will recede even from that, I may: but that is then to be accounted among the heroick Hights of *Charity*, not her binding and indispenfible laws.

III. 1 King. 18. 44. To an envious person every little infirmity or passion, lookt on through his opticks, appears a mountainous guilt. He can improve the least speck or freckle into a leprosie, which shall overspread the whole man, and a cloud no bigger than a mans hand, like that of *Elisha*, may in an instant with the help of prejudice, grow to the utter darkning of the brightest reputation,

tation, and fill the whole horizon with tempest and horror.

C.

I. **M**atth. 5. Is it not a great shame, that that evangelical precept, *doing as we would be done to*, which met with so much reverence even from heathens, that *Severus* the Emperour preferred it to all the maxims of Philosophers, should be thus contemned and violated by Christians.

II. Matth. 7. 1. Private Judgements are superseded by our great Lawgiver in that express prohibition, *Judge not*, and that backed with a severe penalty, *that ye be not judged*. As God hath appropriated vengeance to himself, so has he judicature also; and tis an invasion of his peculiar, for any but his delegates, the lawful Magistrates, to pretend to either.

III. 1 Cor. 13. *Love is patient*, and content with any thing, so it be together with its Beloved : Love is also *impatient* of any thing that may displease the beloved person, hating all sin as the enemy of its friend.

The three and fortieth Meeting.

A.

I. **G**AL. 6. 15. *In Christ Jesus neither circumcision, &c. i. e. In the Gospel and Religion of Christ, nothing is of any value to recommend us to the favour of God, but a new nature, a holy and Virtuous life: The Law preferred circumcision before uncircumcision, but the Gospel of Christ makes no such distinction, but instead of these external signes, requires the inward purity of the heart.*

II. Eph. 4. 20, 21. *But ye have not so learned Christ, if so be, &c. What can learning Christ signifie, but learning the Gospel of Christ? And how could the Ephesians who never saw Christ in the flesh be said to bear him in any other sense, then as they heard his Gospel preached to them? And to be instructed in him as the truth is in Jesus (for so ἐν αὐτῷ ἐδιδάχθητε signifies) must be expounded of his Religion, in its genuine and primitive simplicity, so as Christ taught his disciples.*

I. I. 2 Cor. 5. 17. *If any man be in Christ*
be

he is a new Creature, i.e. Every sincere Christian is a new Creature ; or, Whosoever professeth the Faith of Christ, and lives in the Society of the Christian Church, hath obliged himself to live a new life.

B.

I. I **T**Im.2.4. *God would have all men to be saved.* We cannot imagine why he should lay a narrower design of Love in the Redemption, than in the Creation of Mankind ; that when in the first Creation, he designed all men for happiness, in the new and second Creation he should design and intend the happiness onely of some few ; which is to make him less Good in Redeeming than in Creating Mankind , tho Creation cost him no more than the Exercise of his Power, but Redemption the expence of his blood.

II. Tit.2.12. *Teaching us that denying ungodliness, &c.* Christ's great design was to reform the debauched manners of the World, to reduce mankind to the Obedience of God , to Teach men how to live as well as talk, and to restore the practice

Grace of Piety and Justice, of Meekness and Humility, and an Universal Good Will; and so to restore them to that Honour, and Happiness, and immortality they had lost.

III. Rom. 8. 9. *If any man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of his, i. e.* Unless he have the same temper and disposition of mind which Christ had, which is called *having the Spirit of Christ*, by an ordinary figure of the cause for the effect; for all those Virtues and Graces, wherein our conformity to Christ, consists, are called *the Fruits of the Spirit*, Eph. 5. 9.

C.

I. **G**AL. 4. 19. *Christ is formed in us,* when we are thoroughly instructed in the doctrine and Religion of Christ, and are thereby molded into his likeness and Image: When we love God and men, as our Saviour did; when we are Meek, and humble, and patient, and contented, as he was.

II, Joh. 3. 5. *To be born again of Water*, is to be made the Disciples of Christ, and Subjects of his Spiritual Kingdom

dome by making a publick profession of our Faith in Christ, and of Obedience to him in our Baptism, and we are *born of the Spirit* too, when our minds become subject to Christ, and our Faith is sincere and hearty, and governs all the Motions and Desires of our Soules, and makes us really such as we pretend to be: for all Christian Graces and Vertues are in Scripture attributed to the Spirit of God, as the Author of them.

III. Luk. 10. 16. *He that beareth you beareth me, and He that despiseth, &c.* When nothing is made the condition of our Communion, which is expressly forbidden by the Laws of our supreme Lord, we acknowledge his Authority in our subjection to our spiritual Guides; and we disown his Authority in disowning and affronting theirs.

The four and Fortieth Meeting.

A.

I. **M** Atth. 5. 44. *I say unto you, Love your enemies, &c.* He that shall compare these precepts with the practices of most men, will be ready to say with *Linacer: Aut hoc non est Evangelium, aut nos non sumus Evangelici.* Such is the palpable contradiction of the lives of the generality of Christian men now, to the Rules of the Religion.

II. Heb. 10. 25. *Forsake not the assembling &c.* The confluence to the publick worship was in his dayes so Great, and consent of heart and voice so universal, that *S. Hierome* said, The *Hallelujahs* of the Church was like the noise of many waters, and the *Amen* like thunder.

III. Rom. 1. 8. The Roman Church, whose Faith was Famous, and *spoken of through all the World*, is now as infamous for usurpation, superstition, and cruelty, and so deformed with Pagan rites that Christianity is the least part of her.

B.

B.

I. **G**EN. 50. 20. *God disposed it for Good.*
 It is the usual method of Almighty God to bring about his own designs, by making the sinister intentions of men co-operate towards them. He made use of the unnatural cruelty of *Josephs brethren* to the preservation of the whole family of *Jacob*, sending *Joseph*, as a harbinger and nurse, to provide for them in a famine, The obstinacy and incredulity of the *Jewes* proved to be *the riches of the Gentiles*. The persecution of the *Apostles* at *Jerusalem* made way for the spreading of the Gospel into all other Countries. Instances of this kind are innumerable.

II. GAL. 1. 8. *If an Angel from heaven, &c.* If we admit of new revelations, we lose the old, and our Religion together; we accuse our Saviour and his Apostles, as if they had not sufficiently revealed Gods mind to the World, and we incur *S. Pauls Anathema*, which he denounces against him, whosoever he shall be. If an Angel from heaven, that shall preach any other doctrine than what had been received. And *S. Jude* hath told us, the Faith was *once*, that is, at once, or once for all, delivered to, or by the Saints.

III. 1 Cor.

I I L. 1 Cor. 7. 4. The Church of Corinth first needed the severe check of an Apostle for their wantonness and divisions, that *one was of Paul another of Cephas*, &c. And who can give a more probable account of this their luxuriancy, than from the riches, ease, plenty, and liberty of that City.

C.

I. II. **R** Om. 12. 18. When he so passionately exhorts, *If it be possible, and so far as in you lies have peace with all men*, surely he did not mean, that we should ouely accept of peace, when tis offer'd us for nothing; or be quiet, till we can pick a quarrel: but that we should be at some cost to purchase it, and part with something for it, and deny our selves something, which (but upon that account) we might fully have enjoyed.

II. 1. Cor. 1. 20. *I became things to all men*. He was no longer a starchit inflexible Pharisee, but a complaisant Christian, as some perhaps would have call'd him, a *Latitudinarian*. He that will sacrifice nothing to publick tranquillity must live in perpetual flames here,

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what-

whatsoever become of him hereafter.

111. *Act* 15. 29. When a Council of the Apostles at Jerusalem decreed, *that the Gentiles should abstain from things strangled and from blood*, they depriv'd them of a part of their Christian liberty, meerly to conciliate the Jews to them; and required that to be done for peace, which no Law of God required at their hands.

The five and Forsietb Meeting.

A.

I. **M** *Attb.* 17. 27. Our Saviour himself, when he came into the world, complied with the laws and customs which he found; when a certain tribute was demanded of him, he first proves that he was not obliged to pay it, yet *least he should offend them*; determines to pay it, and works a miracle to enable Peter to do it.

11. *Ier.* 6. 16. *Stand upon the way and enquire &c. i. e. Inquire for a better way, but stand upon the old wayes till you have discover'd it. And its reasonable, before we leave the present Church-way, to produce a better*

better model, least instead of having a new Church we have no Church.

I / I. Rom. 16. 16. The holy kifs, the feasts of love, the order of Deaconesses are no where now observed ; several things instituted by the Apostles were intended, and so construed to be obliging only so long as circumstances should stand as then they did, and no longer. 'Twas no design of the Apostles to bind the Church for ever to a certain form of rituals.

B.

I. E *Pbes. 2. 14.* The Jewish Rituals were contriv'd on purpose to distinguish them from all other people in the world, and therefore is call'd *the middle wall of partition*. But the Christian Religion was to throw down all inclosures, and make of all nations one people , and therefore must be left with that freedom as to circumstantial, that all nations, notwithstanding their divers customs and forms of government, might be capable of receiving it.

I / I. Math. 23, 24. We must have better notions of God, than to think him a Cap-
tious Deity that watches advantages against
his Creatures ; nor make Religion a piece of

nice scrupulosity, and consequently must we neither swallow Camels nor strain at gnats but serve God with the generosity of a tree and a comfortable mind.

III. *Math. 12. 7. If you had known what that meaneth &c.* It is as if our Saviour had said, Had you, censorious Pharisees, understood either God or Religion, as ye might and ought to have done, ye would have known that so long as there is not contumacy and contempt in the omission of those Rituals, but the excuse of a just necessity or the rational consideration of a greater good to preponderate the omission, God doth not impute it for a sin.

C.

I. **A** *Cts 16. 3. The Apostle circumcised Timothy*, to the intent that thereby he might render himself and his ministry more acceptable to the Jews. wherein he hath taught us, that all ceremonial Appendages are perfectly subordinate, and ought to yield to the designs of peace, charity, and edification, as the greater good.

II. *Rom. 14. 17. The Kingdom of God, i. e. the Gospel, is not meat and drink, i. e. consists not, or layes little stress upon those*
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nicé and perplexing matters, *but in righteousness peace and joy*: All the weight is laid upon the more substantial observances of a righteous and Holy life, and a peaceable spirit and conversation.

III. 1 Cor. 13. 7. *Charity believeth all things, hopeth all things.* Christian simplicity, as it means no hurt, so it doth not easily suspect any. But it is the *genius* of an evil man to suspect every man means mischief, because he doth so himself. It's natural for all men to take measures by themselves.

The six and Fortieth Meeting.

A.

I. **M** Attb. 4, 5. *Jerusalem the Holy City.* The Papists are much pleased with calling themselves Catholics, and that sometimes others call them so; not considering in the mean while, that titles in all tongues do continue most commonly long after the things signified by them are gone, upon the same account that St. Matthew calls *Jerusalem the Holy City*, tho this had lost her Holiness, as that hath depraved her Religion,

II. Luke. 8. 5. Papists have the common Faith, and their own proper Romanism, to the very same or like purpose, as the Jewes have the Law and the Prophets, and the Talmud of their Rabbies; and as the Turks have both much of Moses and of the Gospel of Jesus Christ, and all the impieties of Mahomet; this latter to choke the former, as the thorns in the parable did the good seed.

III. Mattk. 26. 13. Mark. 14. 9. The true doctrine of Christ only, and all such other Holy Precepts, Ordinances and Traditions as were proper to his Gospel, as they went forth with a Commission, had sutable power to carry them, and to maintain them throughout all parts, and to all Creatures every where (whom God would call) in the whole world. Hence come such Doctrines, and the Churches on their account to be called Catholick.

B.

1. Mark. 9. 34. If God intended a supreme power for S. Peter, a publick declaration might have presently both quelled the dangerous and undecided contention among the Disciples, who should be the greatest; and prevented all the disorders, which

which have ever since troubled the Church for want of knowing this supream and infallible Governor.

I I. Judg. 2. 10, 11, 12. All the *Roman prayers* and devotions to *Saints* hath not so much as the shadow of *Catholick* : for it crept in among *Christians* ; as the *Baalim* did in *Israel*, when the *Holy men* that had seen *Moses* and *Joshua*, and the elders of that generation were all departed ; when our *Saviour*, and his *Apostles*, and the first preachers of the *Gospel* had left the world.

III. 2. Cor. 6. 15. No sincere *Israelite* can ever think of being saved by the Religion of *Dan* and *Bethel*, because it keeps still *Moses Law*; nor by the *Samaritan Religion*, because they serve *God* as well as *Baal*, Mixt and corrupt Religions are not to be valued so much in what is trodden under mens feet, as by what is predominant and set upon their high *Altars*. The great building raised at *Jernsalem* by *Adrian*, did not cease to be *Jupiters Temple* for being raised upon *Holy foundations*.

C.

I. **M**ark. 16. 20. 1 Cor. 14. 12. True Christian *Miracles* are commonly but for a time, and for the Authorizing of the Gospel : For the gift of Working miracles is as that of speaking languages, intended for the conversion of unbelievers, and for assisting the Gospel, whensoever it should be first preached.

II. *Matth.* 7. 22. The true *Miracles* done in *Christs Name* (and power too) shall recommend only *Christs Gospel*, not their iniquity who work them.

III. 2 *Thef.* 2. 9. *The Roman Miracles*, after that the Gospel had been abundantly confirmed over all the world by true Miracles, were done in times reserved for false miracles, and are branded by this prediction, that *Antichrist* should come and enchant men with strong delusions and lying wonders.

The seven and Fortieth Meeting.

A.

L. 2. **C**Or. 6. 17. *Be ye separate:* This text cannot clear our separatists from the guilt of *Schism*: which is a voluntary departure, without just cause given, from the Church whereof they were once members: or, a breach of that *Communion* wherein a man might have continued without sin.

II. Judg. 18. 7. The magistrates are called *Masters of restraint*. Hebr. And as such, they must needs be an eye fore to all loose or exorbitant persons, who do consequently wish, that Authority should lose its force and laws their veneration, that so their vices may be uncontrouled.

III. Acts. 15. 10. The law of *Moses* was a yoke which neither we nor our fathers were able to bear: upon this account especially, because it enjoyned a great number of little Observances, which by their multitude were hard to be remembered, by their nicety difficult to be observed, and having no essential goodness in themselves had less pow-

er

er upon the consciences of men to awaken their care and diligence about them.

B.

I. **A**cts 15. 29. The Apostles in their Council found out a middle way for the Jews and Gentiles to meet in : that the Gentile Converts should comply with the Jews in abstaining from fornication, from things strangled, and from blood; and on the other side the Jewish Converts should abate of their rigour, and not require of the Gentiles the strict terms of compleat Judaism.

I. Gal. 3. 19. *Whereunto then served the Law? It was added &c.* It was a kind of *Interim*, or like a parenthesis, which when it shall be left out, the former and latter parts joyn together again without any interruption of the sense : i. e. when this *Interim*, or temporary provision of the Law shall be taken away, the primitive Patriarchal Religion, and that brought in by our Saviour, shall seem to be of one piece, the latter beginning where the former ended.

III. Rom. 19. 2. *Let every one of us please his neighbor.* i. e. in such things as are not not the matter of any law. For as I must have respect to my brothers infirmity, so
must

must I much more reverence God's ordinance, the lawful *Magistrate*.

C.

I. **G**AL. 5. 13. *By love serve one another.* And with great equity: for he that will provoke his brother to sin, by doing that which he himself can omit without sin, is guilty of sin in so doing.

II. 1 Cor. 8. 13. *If meat make my brother to offend, &c.* The eating of *flesh* was under no command, and consequently he should not offend if he forbore it; therefore he resolves that he would abridge himself of his own *liberty*, rather than offend another.

III. Eph. 3. 8. *Haman* designing to ruin the whole Church of the Jewes, first debates their Religion as not fit for the protection of the Prince, *that it contained laws contrary to all people*, and that they would not obey the Kings Laws. There is nothing casts so indelible a blemish upon Religion, as when the professors of it are turbulent, unperswadable; ungovernable.

The

The eight and Fortieth Meeting.

A

I. **G**AL. 3. 27. *He that is baptized into Christ hath put on Christ i. e. hath engaged himself to be conformed to his Image and likeness, to adorn his mind with all those virtues and graces which appeared in our Saviour's life.*

II. John. 6. 53. *The Lords Supper is a spiritual feeding on Christ, Eating his flesh and drinking his blood : That is, when those visibles figures of his death and sufferings affect our minds with such a strong and passionate sense of his love to us, and excite in us such a hope in God, as transforms us into a divine nature. And this is our real union to Christ; as it were flesh of his flesh, and bone of his bones. Eph. 5. 30.*

III. I. John. 1. 6. *If we say we have fellowship with him, and walk in darkness, we lie. i. e. We abuse ourselves, if we hope that God will own himself our Father, and bestow the inheritance of children on us, while we live in sin: but when we joyn the practice*

practice of real righteousness with the visible profession of Christianity, then God will own us for his children, and Christ for true members of his body.

B.

I. 2 **C**Or. 6. 14. *Be ye not unequally yoked with unbelievers* i. e. have no society with those men, whose religion is so contrary to yours, that you will be as uneasy to each other, as two heifers in the same yoke, which draw different ways.

II. 1 Cor. 10. 16. *Is it not the communion of the body of Christ.* He calls it the communion, because it signifies the fellowship of Christians with each other, and as it signifies also our fellowship with God; for we eat of the Sacrifice which is God's meat, being entertained at his Table.

III. 1 Joh. 1. 3. *Our fellowship is with the Father and with his Son Jesus Christ.* When we joyn in communion with the Church of Christ, and live in a regular subjection to our spiritual Governors, and a mutual discharge of all Christian offices, when we profess to believe the Gospel, and to obey the laws of our common Saviour; then we are visibly united to Christ, as subjects to their

their Prince, and members to their head. And when this profession is sincere and hearty, then our union to Christ is real and spiritual too. And this union or fellowship with Christ entitles us to his peculiar care and providence.

C.

I. Joh. 1. 16. *Of his fulness we all received, and Grace for Grace.* The fulness which was in Christ is a fulness of *Grace and truth*: This Grace and truth is opposed to the Law of *Moses*, and signifies the Gospel, which is a Covenant of Grace, and is expressly called the Grace of God, *Tis. 2. 11.* and contains the most clear Revelations of the divine will, in opposition to types and shadows. This is the fulness we receive from Christ, a perfect relation of the divine will concerning the salvation of mankind, which contains so many excellent promises, that it may well be called *Grace*; and prescribes such a plain and simple religion so agreeable to the natural notions of good and evil, that it may well be called *Truth*. The repetition of the word *Grace* with a preposition, signifies only that abundance of grace which is now manifested by the Gospel of Christ.

I I. Joh.

II. Joh. 1. 18. *No man hath seen God, &c.*
i. e. No man ever before had so perfect a knowledg of the will of God (which is here called *seeing God*, because sight gives us the clearest evidence and the most perfect and particular knowledg) but the Son of God, who perfectly understood all his most secret counsels, hath perfectly declared the will of his Father to us.

III. Col. 2. 3. *In Christ are hid all the Treasures: rather, in whom are all the hidden Treasures of Wisdom and knowledg.* i. e. who hath now revealed to us all those Treasures which in former ages were hidden from the world.

The nine and Fortieth Meeting.

A.

I. **C**ol. 2. 9. *For in him dwelleth all the fullness of the Godhead (of the Deity) bodily.* An allusive and metaphorical expression. For God, who is a *spirit*, cannot in a proper sense dwell *Bodily* in any thing. Here is an allusion to Gods dwelling in the Temple at *Jerusalem* by Types and Figures, which were the sym

symbols of his presence. *Bodily* is oppos'd to *figurative and typical* : and this is a plain demonstration of the perfection of the Gospel-revelation, that the fulness of the Deity dwelt *substantially* in Christ : we need not doubt, but that so excellent a prophet as he was, in whom the Deity it self inhabited, hath perfectly revealed God's will to us.

II. Eph. 1. 23. *Which is his Body, the fulness of him that filleth all in all.* Where the Church is call'd the fulness of Christ, which makes him (as it were) compleat and perfect: for he cannot be a perfect head without a body. Hence the Church is call'd *Christ*, 1. Cor. 12. 12. And Beza tells us this is the reason of that phrase which so frequently occurs in the new Testament, of *being in Christ*, i. e. being members of the Christian Church.

III. Eph. 1. 23. The Christian Church is call'd the *fulness of Christ*, with respect to its extent and Universality, that it is not confined to any particular nation, as the Jewish Church was, but takes in Jews and Gentiles, bond and free. For this, if we consult the Text, seems to be the meaning of, Col. 1. 19. *For it pleased the Father that in him should all fulness dwell.* He is made the Head of the Universal Church both in heaven and earth.

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I. Ph. 1. 23. *He fileth all in all*, i. e. doth not confine his care and providence, and the influences of his grace, to any one Nation or People, but extends it to the whole world.

II. Eph. 4. 13. *To the measure of the Stature of the fulness of Christ*. Which is the explication of *to a perfect man*; i. e. to that perfection of Faith and knowledge which becomes the Christian Church

III. John. 18. 6. *I am the way, the truth and the life*. i. e. I declare the true and onely way to life and happiness, and no man can throughly understand the will of God, nor consequently be a true worshipper of him, without learning of me.

C.

I. I Oh. 11. 26. *I am the resurrection and the life*, &c. i. e. He hath power to raise the dead, and will actually raise all those who are his sincere followers, and reward them with immortality.

N

II. Joh.

II. Joh. 5. 25. *The dead shall hear the voice of the Son of God, &c.* i.e. He first raises those who are dead in sin to a new spiritual life, and then hath authority to raise them to an immortal life.

III. Col. 3. 3. *You are dead, and your life is hid with Christ in God.* You profess your selves to be dead to this World, in Conformity to the death of Christ; and that immortal life, which you expect to enjoy with Christ, is at present concealed from your view.

The Fifth Meeting.

A.

I. I **C**OR. I. 22. *The Jewes require a sign, and the Greeks, &c.* The Jewes were all for signes and miracles, the Greeks were for curious Philosophical speculations, which might gratifie their inquisitive minds; and therefore neither of them could relish the plain simple Doctrine of a Crucified Christ.

II. I COR. I. 24. This crucified Saviour
is

is the power of God and the wisdom of God. i.e. the most powerful method which was ever used by God for the reforming the World, and the contrivance and effect of excellent wisdom. And thus the Gospel of Christ is called the power of God to salvation to them that believe, Rom. I. 16. And by this foolishness of preaching, i.e. by preaching this foolish doctrine (as it was accounted by the wise men of the World) of a crucified Christ, it pleased God to save them that believe.

III. Jer. 23. 6. Christ is expressly call'd *The Lord our Righteousness*. Is it, that the only Righteousness wherewith we must appear before God is the Righteousness of Christ imputed to us? Or rather, Righteousness here signifies no more than Mercy, kindness and beneficence? And so *the Lord our Righteousness* is the Lord who does good to us, who is our Saviour and deliverer. Which is very agreeable to the reason of this name, *that in his days Judah shall be saved, and Israel shall dwell safely*

B.

I. **I** Sai. 54. 17. *Their Righteousness is of me, saith the Lord.* Which is a parallel expression to *The Lord our Righteousness*, and signifies no more than that God will avenge their cause, and deliver them from all their enemies.

II. Isa. 61. 10. *The Garments of Salvation and the robe of Righteousness* do not signify an imputed righteousness, but those great deliverances God promised to *Israel* in the former verses, which should make them as glorious in the eyes of men, as a splendid garment would.

III. Matth. 5. 19, 20. Our Saviour in his *Sermons* to the people makes no mention at all of *imputed* righteousness, but severely enjoins them the practice of *an universal righteousness*, and threatens those *who break the least commandment*, that they shall not enter into the Kingdom of Heaven.

C

I. **P**hil.3.9. Is it not worth observing that in all the New Testament there is no such expression as *the Righteousness of Christ imputed*? We find there the *Righteousness of God* (that which he commands and rewards) and the *Righteousness of Faith*, and *the Righteousness of God which is by Faith in Jesus Christ*. Is it not strange that neither Christ nor his Apostles should once tell us of the Imputation of Christs Righteousness, did the mystery of the Gospel consist in it?

II. Rom.3.and 4. The great Dispute in the Epistle to the Romans is, whether we must be justified by the *Law of Moses* or by the *Faith of Christ*. That is, whether the observation of all the external Rites & Ceremonies of the Law, & an external conformity of our actions to the moral precepts of it, will justify a man before God; or that sincere and universal obedience, which the Gospel of Christ requires, which transforms our minds into the likeness of God, and makes us new creatures.

III. Rom.4.3. *Abraham believed God,*
 N 3 *and*

and it was counted to him for Righteousness: And this, while he was uncircumcised; Which is a convincing argument against the Jewes, that circumcision and the observance of the Law of Moses is not necessary to justification. Because Abraham, who was the Father of the Faithful, and is set forth for a pattern of our justification, was justified without it.

The one and Fiftieth Meeting.

A:

I. **H** Eb. 2. 10. God sent sent his Son into the world to take upon him our nature, and him being *the Captain of our Salvation* he would perfect through sufferings; that no man might think it much to suffer, when God spared not his own Son; and every man might submit to the necessity, when the Christ of God was not exempt. And yet no man could fear the event, which was to follow sad beginnings, when it behoved even Christ to suffer, and so to enter into glory.

II. Ec-

II. Eccles. 12. 7. God did not onely by Revelation and the Sermons of the Prophets to his Church, but even to all mankind, competently teach, and effectively perswade, *that the soul of man does not die*; but that altho things were ill here, yet they should be well hereafter; that the evils of this life were short and tollerable; and that to the good, who usually feel most of them, they should end in honour and advantages.

III. 2 Thes. 1. 5. *We must through much tribulation, &c.* Christ himself, and his Apostles, and his whole army of Martyrs, dyed under the violence of evil men. When Vertue made good men poor, and free speaking of brave truths made the wise to lose their liberty; when an excellent life hastened an opprobrious death, and the obeying God destroyed our selves; it was but time to look about for *another state of things*, where justice should rule and Virtue find her own portion; where the men that were like to God in justice and mercy, should also partake of his felicity.

B.

I. I. **C**Or. 15. 19. *If in this life onely* &c. We are sick and we are afflicted, we do well and we are disgraced, we tell truths and few believe us, speak well and we are derided; but the proud are exalted, and the wicked are delivered, and evil men reign over us, and the covetous snatch our little bundles of mony from us, and every where the wisest and the best men are oppressed: but therefore because it is thus, and thus it is not well, we hope for some great good thing hereafter. For if in this life only we had hope, then we Christians, all we to whom persecution is allotted for our portion, we who must be patient under the Cross, and receive injuries and say nothing but prayers; *We certainly were of all men the most miserable.*

II. 1 Cor. 15. 19. *If in this life only we had hopes,* saith the Apostle, meaning that in another life also we have hopes, we shall go into another place, and in the state of separation we shall have more hopes: our faith shall have more

evidence, and our hopes shall be of more certainty and perspicuity, and next to possessions; we shall have very much good, and be very sure of much more.

III. Matth. 22. 32. *God is the God of Abraham &c.* i. e. the gracious God, the Benefactor, the Rewarder, and therefore *Abraham* is not dead, but is fallen asleep, and he shall be restored in the Resurrection to receive those blessings and rewards, by the title of which, God was called the God of *Abraham*.

C.

I. I **C**Or. 15. 19. *Then are we of all men most miserable.* But because this cannot be, that God who is just and good should suffer them that heartily serve him, to be really and finally miserable, and yet in this world they are so, very frequently: therefore in another world, they shall live to receive a full recompence of reward. *Deus est justus, animus est immortalis*, S. Clements.

II. Mark. 12. 27. *God is not the God of*

of the Dead but of the Living : But God is the God of *Abraham*, and the other Patriarchs : Therefore they are not dead ; dead to this world , but alive to God : That is, tho this life be lost, yet they shall have another and a better : a life in which God shall manifest himself to be their God to all the purposes of benefit and eternal blessings.

III. Job. 35. 10. *God my Maker is he that giveth Songs in the night*, said *Elihu*. That is, the servant of God is not so permitted to the malice of evil men, or the asperities of fortune, that they have not many refreshments, and great comforts, and the perpetual festivities of a Holy conscience. God as a reward giveth a cheerful spirit, and makes a man to sing with joy ; when other men are sad with the solemn darkness, and with the affrights of conscience, and with the illusions of the night.

The two and Fifteenth Meeting.

A.

I. **L**uk. 16. 19. It is remarkable in the parable of *Dives and Lazarus*, that the poor man, the afflicted Saint dyed first, *Dives* being permitted to his purple and fine linnen, to his delicious fare, and (which he most of all needed) to a space of repentance: But in the meantime the poor man was rescued from his sad portion of this life and carried into Abraham's bosome.

II. Luk. 16. 22. *Into Abraham's bosome*. He who was denyed in this World to be feasted even with the portion of dogs, was placed in the bosome of the Patriarch, that is in the highest room: for so it was in their *Discubitus*, or lying down to meat: the chief guest, the most beloved person, did lean upon the bosome of the master of the feast, so did S. *John* lean upon the breast of Jesus, and so did *Lazarus* upon the breast of *Abraham*.

III. *Ibid.* *Sinus Abraham* may be rendered

dred, *the bay of Abraham*, alluding to the place of rest, where ships put in after a tempestuous and dangerous navigation. The storm was quickly over with the poor man; and the Angel of God brought the good man's soul to a safe port, where he should be disturbed no more,

B.

I. **R** Evel. 14. 13. *Blessed are the dead.* As soon as ever the soul goes from the body, it is blessed. *Blessed*, I say, but not perfect: it rejoices in peace and a holy hope. Here we have hopes mingled with fear, there our hope is heightened with joy and confidence: it is all the comfort that can be, in the expectation of unmeasurable joys: it is onely, *not fruition*, not the joys of a perfect possession, but less than that, it is every good thing else. It is the comfort of that joy, which makes them blessed, who dy in the love of God, and in the faith and obedience of the Lord Jesus Christ.

II. Luk. 23. 43. Our blessed Saviour told the converted thief, he should *that day be with him in paradise*. As the Garden of
Eden

Eden was a place of great beauty, pleasure and tranquillity; so the state of separate souls, was a state of peace and excellent delights. That day both Christ and the Thief were to be in Paradise; but Christ himself was not then ascended into heaven, and therefore Paradise was no part of that region, where Christ now, and the Saints hereafter, shall reign in glory. Christ said, tho you only ask to be remembered when I come into my Kingdom, not only that shall be performed in time, but even to day thou shalt have great refreshment, the comfort of Paradise; as *Lazarus* was comforted.

11. 2 Cor 12.2.4. *Taken up into the third Heaven: into Paradise.* The raptures and visions were distinct. For *S. Paul* being a Jew, and speaking after the manner of his nation, makes *Paradise* a distinct thing from the *third heaven*: the Jews deny any orbs to be in heaven, but they make three regions only, the one of clouds, the second of Stars, and the third of Angels.

C.

I. **R** Evel. 2. 7. *To him that overcometh will I give to eat of the tree of life* By eating of this tree of life in the Paradise of God, is meant, that they who dye well shall immediately be feasted with the deliciousness of a holy Conscience: their tree of life shall germinate, they shall then feel the Comforts of having done good works, a sweet remembrance and a Holy peace shall caress and feast them, and there *they shall walk in white*, Revel. 3. 4. as candidats of the resurrection to immortality.

I I. Matth. 8. 11. *Sit down with Abraham* Because he is the father of the faithful, therefore *to be with Abraham*, or *to sit down with Abraham* (in the time of the old Testament) did signifie the same thing as *to be in Paradise*: but *to be in Abrahams bosom*, signifies a great eminence of place and comfort, which is indulged to the most excellent and the most afflicted.

III. Phil 1. 23. *As being with Abraham* was the specification of the more general word of *Paradise* in the Old Testament

ment; to being with Christ is the specification of it in the New, so S. Stephen prayed, Lord Jesus receive my spirit, and S. Paul said, I desire to be dissolved and to be with Christ.

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Of the New Testament.

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Mark signal words in' Chapters with your pen!
Learn by heart Twelve or Eight lines every day,
In short time the whole Lesson you will say.
Whether you Ride, or Walk, or Walking ly,
The Holy Writ will bear you company.*

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Contents of the New Testament. Mark the
signal words with your Pen in
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⁶ ⁶ ⁴ ⁴ ⁵ ³ Gal. Eph. Phil. Col. and Thessalon.

⁶ ⁴ ³ ¹ Timothy, Titus, Philemon.

¹³ ⁵ ⁵ ³ ⁵ ¹ ¹ ¹ Hebrews, James, Peter, John and Jude.

²² The things to come Reveal'd and view'd.

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1. Jesus, the Virgin. 2. The Wise men.

¹ ¹³ ¹ 3. John Baptist, Jesus. 4. Tempted then.

³ ⁴⁸ ¹ ¹⁶ ⁵ 5. Blest, perfect. 6. Alms, fasting and prayer.

¹ ²¹ ⁶ ²⁷ 7. Judge not, Lord Lord. 8. Sick, Sea and Air.

⁹ ⁵ 9. Matthew is call'd. 10. Twelve sent away.

⁷ ²⁹ ¹ 11. John Baptist, my Yoke. 12. Sabbath day.

³ ²⁵ ³ 13. The Sower, Tares. 14. Herod and John.

³ ²⁸ ¹⁶ 15. Tradition, great faith. 16. Christ the Son.

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⁹21. Hofanna, two Sons. ²⁸22. ³⁶Great command.
¹³23. Hypocrites, Salem. ³⁷24. ²No stone stand.
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² 9. Twelve sent, Christ. ²⁰ 10. Seventy, one thing best. ¹ ⁴²
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| 1. | Perswade men. | 2. | Withstood to the face. |
| | 10 | | 11 |
| 3. | Justified not by law but grace. | | 11 |
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| | 7 | | 1 |
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The Contents of the New Testament.

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| 5. | ⁸ Now are ye light, | ²² wives, mystery. | |
| 6. | ⁶ Not eye service, | ²⁴ sincerity. | |

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| 3. | ¹⁴ ²¹ The mark, vile body. | 4. | ^{11.} Learn content. |

Col. 4.

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|----|---|----|----------------------------------|
| 1. | ¹⁵ First born, head of the Church. | 2. | ⁸ Beware. |
| 3. | ⁵ Mortify. | 4. | ² Continue in prayer. |

1 Thes. 5.

- | | | | | | |
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| 4. | ¹¹ ¹³ Be quiet, hope. | 5. | ¹⁶ ¹⁷ Rejoyce and pray. | | |

2 Thes.

The Contents of the New Testament.

2 Thes. 3.

- | | | | |
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| 3. | ⁶ Withdraw, ¹⁰ work, ¹⁴ word, ¹⁶ conclusion. | | |

1 Tim. 6.

- | | | | |
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| 1. | ¹⁵ Christ Jesus came. | 2. | ² Kings ran-
⁵ some, ¹³ Eve. |
| 3. | ² A blameless Bishop. | 4. | ¹¹ Teach and ¹² live. |
| 5. | ² Widows, ¹⁷ rule well, ²⁴ some follow late. | | |
| 6. | ¹ Yoke, ⁶ gaine, ⁸ content, ¹⁸ communicate. | | |

2 Tim. 4.

- | | | | |
|----|---|----|------------------------------|
| 1. | ⁶ Stir up, ¹³ hold fast. | 2. | ¹⁵ Divide aright. |
| 3. | ⁵ A form, ¹⁶ all Scripture. | 4. | ⁷ A good fight. |

Tit. 3.

- | | | | |
|----|--|----|-----------------------------------|
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| 2. | ² The aged, ⁴ young. | 3. | ⁸ Good works maintain. |

Philemon.

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The Prisoner writes to make another,
At once a Servant and a Brother.

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| 3. | ¹² An evil heart. | 4. | ⁹ ¹⁶ Rest, time of need. |
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 1 9
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- ²⁵
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| | ⁵ ⁸ | | ⁹ |
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